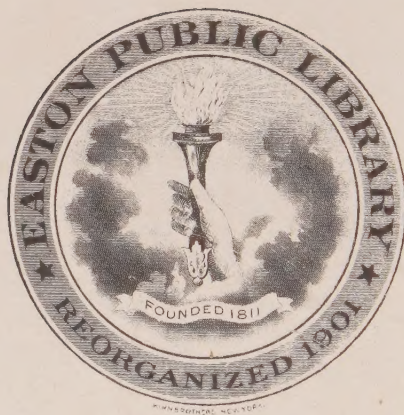
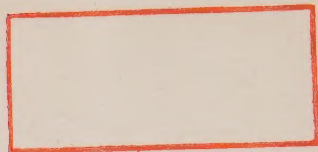
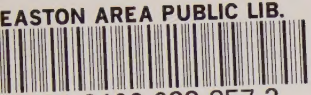


DATE DUE



EASTON AREA PUBLIC LIB.



1901 9100 033 857 2

NO LONGER PROPERTY
OF EASTON AREA
PUBLIC LIBRARY



THE STARS AND STRIPES

*From an address on the Flag, delivered in Congress by
Hon. Frederick C. Hicks of the First New York District
(Long Island)*

“THE FLAG OF AMERICA does more than proclaim mere power or acclaim a great and glorious history. There are no myths or legends associated with its origin; it tells no story of crushed liberties or violated rights; it sprang neither from the sorrows of the oppressed nor the sufferings of the conquered. Its majestic beauty expresses the independence of a thoughtful, courageous, conscientious people; the faith, the lofty aspirations and the high ideals of representative democracy; the advance of a new Nation dedicated to liberty, to law, to justice and to human rights.

ITS RIPPLING FOLDS wave a benediction to the yesterday of accomplishment and beckon the tomorrows of progress with hope and confidence; it heralds the noble purposes of a mighty people and carries a message of hope and inspiration to all mankind. Its glowing splendor appeals to us to demand international justice and arbitration; it commands us to self-sacrifice, and to universal obligation of service which alone can maintain equality of rights and fullness of opportunity in our Republic. Its stars and its stripes voice the spirit of America calling to a Nation of indomitable courage and infinite possibilities to live the tenets of Christianity, to teach the gospel of work and usefulness, to advance education, to demand purity of thought and action in public life and to protect the liberties of free government from the aggressions of despotic power.

PATRIOTISM is more than a sentiment; loyalty is more than an expression. The one is the acceptance of the duties—absolute and universal—which every citizen owes his country; the other the determination—sincere and unfaltering—to perform those duties irrespective of the sacrifice. In silent grandeur the flag floats over the graves of the dead, over the homes of the living, the emblem of truth and righteousness, inspiring men's hearts on the land and on sea with faith and hope, the symbol of the power, the unity and the purpose of our Republic, now and forever.”

Frederick C. Hicks,



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2024



FREDERICK C. HICKS

THE FLAG

of the

UNITED STATES

by

HON. FREDERICK C. HICKS



PRIVATELY PRINTED

WASHINGTON
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

1926

929 9
3452

Copyrighted 1926
by
MARIE STEVENS HICKS



First edition, 1917
Second edition, 1918
Third edition, 1925
(Revised and enlarged.)

VRABBU OLUBU ROTBA
AN ROTBA

G.Hic 136

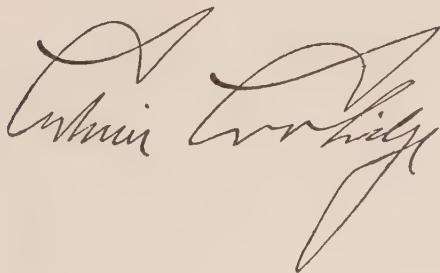
PRESS OF W. F. ROBERTS COMPANY

WASHINGTON, D. C.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

The Stars and Stripes, our Ensign, is the symbol of our union and of our honor, our ideals and our aspirations as a nation. Anything which tends to accentuate this symbolism and to increase the respect and reverence for our flag is a real contribution to the welfare of our country, and is a patriotic service. Such is this address by Mr. Hicks.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Arthur L. Hicks". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping underline.

FOREWORD



“THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES” first appeared as a speech delivered by Frederick C. Hicks, Representative from the First New York District (Long Island), before the House of Representatives on Flag Day, June 14, 1917, the one hundred and fortieth anniversary of the adoption of the Stars and Stripes by the Continental Congress. This speech subsequently appeared in the Congressional Record.

The second edition was brought out as a public document in pamphlet form through a Resolution introduced in the Second Session of the 67th Congress on June 6, 1922, to meet the general demand for the speech. (Government Printing Office, House Document Number 326.)

The third edition—revised and greatly enlarged through an accumulation of valuable data collected from sources in various parts of the country, was verified and assembled by Mr. Hicks during the summer and autumn of 1925, and is now privately printed by Mrs. Hicks, May, 1926.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	PAGE
FOREWORD	5
INTRODUCTION	11
THE FLAG OF AMERICA.....	15
ANCIENT FLAGS.....	19
MEDIAEVAL FLAGS.....	25
DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRITISH FLAG.....	41
OTHER FLAGS OF THE NEW WORLD.....	47
COLONIAL FLAGS.....	51
THE RATTLESNAKE FLAG.....	67
OTHER REVOLUTIONARY FLAGS.....	81
THE CONTINENTAL FLAG.....	87
THE STARS AND STRIPES.....	99
THE STARS AND STRIPES IN ACTION.....	115
THE BON HOMME RICHARD.....	131
THE FLAG OF FIFTEEN STRIPES.....	145
THE CONFEDERATE FLAGS.....	157
SPECIAL FLAGS AND FIRST DISPLAYS.....	165
CONCLUSION	177

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

	FACING PAGE
THE AMERICAN FLAG.....	<i>Frontispiece</i>
FREDERICK C. HICKS.....	1
EGYPTIAN STANDARDS.....	19
ROMAN STANDARDS.....	23
BANNER OF ENGLAND.....	29
THE BRITISH FLAG.....	41
FLAG OF THE NORTHMEN.....	47
NEW ENGLAND FLAG 1737.....	51
RATTLESNAKE FLAG.....	67
FLAG OF LEXINGTON AND CONCORD— BEDFORD FLAG.....	81
THE FLAG OF THE UNITED COLONIES.....	87
STARS AND STRIPES.....	99
“FIRST RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN FLAG BY A FOREIGN NATION”.....	129
BON HOMME RICHARD FLAG.....	131
FORT MCHENRY FLAG.....	145
OLD GLORY.....	149
THE CONFEDERATE FLAGS.....	157
UNITED STATES PEACE FLAG.....	177
FORT MCHENRY AT THE ENTRANCE TO BALTIMORE HARBOR.....	179
HOUSE IN WHICH FORT MCHENRY BATTLE FLAG WAS MADE.....	181
FLAGS WHICH SIGNALIZED AMERICA’S ENTRANCE INTO THE WORLD WAR.....	185

INTRODUCTION



IN PREPARING the following pages it has been my endeavor to present a true history of the flag, so far as it has been possible to ascertain the facts from documents and records which I feel are authentic, and while realizing the shortcomings of this history, I trust that those who read these pages will credit me with writing with a pen unbiased by sentiment, locality or tradition. If this history will stimulate, even in the slightest degree, the patriotism of the reader or instill in the hearts of our people greater loyalty to our country and deeper reverence for our flag, I shall feel that the hours occupied in research and investigation have been profitably spent.

I desire to acknowledge the debt I owe those who have generously assisted me in the investigation of records, as well as those who have contributed their services in assembling in proper order the data collected.

To my wife, whose deep interest in my work has been not only of untold material assistance, but a constant inspiration as well, these pages are affectionately dedicated.

The prestige of our flag was achieved by the practice of civic virtues and by the steadfast adherence to the principles of enlightened democracy.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

I speed this message on its way in the hope that it may encourage the study of our heroic past among the youth of the land and help to teach them the lessons of true citizenship, which gave birth to our Republic and by which it shall be preserved in all its vigor and splendor.

The Stars and Stripes is the flag of freedom, of justice, of opportunity. The honor, the ideals and the purposes of the greatest nation the world has ever seen are wrapped within its folds. It is a flag of peace and should never be unfurled in aggressive strife, but when given to the breezes in the cause of oppressed humanity, we of today and tomorrow should emulate the deeds of our forefathers in inscribing on its folds fresh evidence of duties nobly performed and sacrifices generously made.

The flag for which countless thousands have given freely of their lives to preserve from dishonor and defeat, for which other thousands have contributed unsparingly of their services to advance in its majestic sweep onward, flies not in defiance but in protection; not in hatred but in reverence, and the sacred obligation rests with us to maintain the glorious record of achievement without a blemish and without a stain.

As we view the past with thanksgiving in our hearts for the blessings which have come to us, and look to the future fully mindful that the onward

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

progress of our nation is under the guidance of Divine Providence, let us recall the words of the Quaker poet, Whittier:

“Oh! make Thou us through centuries long,
In Peace secure, in Justice strong;
Around our gift of Freedom, draw
The safeguards of Thy righteous law;
And, cast in some diviner mould,
Let the new cycle shame the old.”

FREDERICK C. HICKS.

*Port Washington, Long Island,
June 14, 1925.*





THE FLAG OF AMERICA



THE FLAG held in reverence by one hundred and sixteen million of our people is a modern standard. There are no myths or legends associated with its origin; it tells no story of crushed liberties or violated rights, for it sprang neither from the sorrows of the oppressed nor the sufferings of the conquered. Its majestic beauty expresses the independence of a thoughtful, courageous, conscientious people; the faith, the lofty aspirations and the high ideals of representative democracy; the advance of a new Nation dedicated to liberty, to law, to justice and to human rights.

The flag of America does more than proclaim mere power or acclaim a great and glorious history. Its rippling folds wave a benediction to the yesterdays of accomplishment and beckon the tomorrows of progress with hope and confidence; it heralds the noble purposes of a mighty people and carries a message of hope and inspiration to all mankind. Its glowing splendor appeals to us to demand international justice and arbitration; it

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

wills us to self-sacrifice, and to universal obligation of service which alone can maintain equality of rights and fullness of opportunity in our Republic.

The flag of America commands obedience to law and respect for our institutions; it impels defense of the Constitution from the assaults of anarchistic heresies; it demands protection of the many against the greed of the few who place personal profit above the general welfare. Its stars and its stripes voice the spirit of America calling to a Nation of indomitable courage and infinite possibilities to live the tenets of Christianity, to teach the gospel of work and usefulness, to advance education, to demand purity of thought and action in public life and to guard the liberties of free government from the aggressions of despotic power.

In this hour when social unrest, political upheaval and economic distrust permeate every phase of our national life, if the Government bequeathed to us by the fathers is to be an inheritance for our children, it is imperative for us to stand steadfast against the assaults of discord and lawlessness, and adhere unflinchingly to the principles which have prospered our country through the decades. Patriotism is more than a sentiment; loyalty is more than an expression. The one is the acceptance of the duties—absolute and universal—which

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

every citizen owes his country; the other the determination—sincere and unfaltering—to perform those duties irrespective of the sacrifice.





EGYPTIAN STANDARDS

Some of the earliest known emblems showing fundamental, yet undeveloped means of distinguishing various branches of the military service.



ANCIENT FLAGS

THE term flag is a generic one and covers many different varieties. It has been suggested that the word is derived from the Anglo-Saxon verb "Fleogan"—to fly or float in the wind, or from the old German word "flackern"—to flutter. The Encyclopedia Britannica defines "Flag" (or 'Flagge', a common Teutonic word in this sense, but apparently first recorded in English) as a piece of bunting or similar material, admitting of various shapes and colors. The word may simply be derived onomatopoeically, or transferred from the botanical 'flag'; or an original meaning of a 'piece of cloth' may be connected with the twelfth Century English 'flage' meaning a baby's garment; the verb 'to flag' (i.e. droop), may have originated in the idea of a pendulous piece of bunting or may be connected with the Old French word 'flaguir'—to become flaccid.

The Century Dictionary gives the following derivation and definition of Flag:—"Early modified English *Flagge*; of Danish or Swedish origin.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Old Dutch—*Vlagghe*; Dutch—*Vlag*; Swedish—*Flagg*; Danish—*Flag*—a piece of thin, light fabric, especially bunting, usually rectangular and oblong, or square, but some times triangular, notched or otherwise varied in form.”

While there is no authentic history relating to the banners and standards used by the peoples of remote antiquity, it is probable that as soon as men began to form themselves into tribes and clans or unite for a common purpose, some symbol was used to express the general sentiment. In many ancient ruins, representations of the objects used as ensigns have been discovered. History, both sacred and profane, records the use of standards or banners by the armies of all nations in the distant past. From the sculptures and paintings on the monuments of Egypt it is evident that the use of standards and flags was common in the Valley of the Nile thousands of years before the Christian era. It was evidently the custom among the Egyptians for each battalion to carry a distinguishing emblem formed of such objects as, there is reason to believe, were associated in the minds of the soldiers with feelings of awe and devotion. The emblems represented sacred objects or the figures of animals that typified the deities, or tablets bearing names or devices, or the fan-like arrangement of feathers that symbolized the majesty of the Pharaoh. It is probable that the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Egyptians were the first to employ flags and standards for they had the earliest military organizations of which we have any knowledge.

Excavations among the ruins of the Assyrian civilization prove that these peoples were also accustomed to the use of standards. Among the sculptures unearthed at Ninevah in Mesopotamia, two designs have been identified as standards, one the figure of a man drawing a bow and standing on a running bull, the other two bulls running in opposite directions. It is probable that these are similar to the emblems of peace and war which were displayed on the yoke of Darius's chariot, this being the custom also among the Persians. In an article in the London Times of January 1900, giving an account of important archæological discoveries made on the site of the ancient city of Susa (the Biblical Shushan), reference is made to some carvings that depict standards in use fifty-seven centuries ago. These banners are described as follows:—

“Below the King, mounting some steps, some three ensign bearers, each with the right hand placed on his dagger, and his left holding the banner. The ensigns are of considerable interest, as they are already familiar to us from the engraved gems of Chaldea, namely, the sacred lance, whip and mace.”

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

The ancient Hebrews had banners for the various tribes and in the Old Testament, Book of Numbers, Chapter 1, we find: "And the children of Israel shall pitch their tents, every man by his own camp, and every man by his own standard." In Chapter 2: "And the Lord spake unto Moses and unto Aaron, saying, Every man of the children of Israel shall pitch by his own standard, with the ensign of their father's house * * * " It is claimed that each of the twelve tribes of Israel had its own distinctive standard, the devices, consisting of the figures of a man, a wolf, a bird, a boat, a sword or some agricultural implement, on fields of different colors. Concerning these descriptions, the Encyclopedia Britannica says:—"Rabbinical writers have assigned the different devices of the different Jewish tribes, but the authenticity of their testimony is extremely doubtful." It is also asserted that the Israelites carried the sacred banner of the Maccabees, with the initial letters of the Hebrew text, "Who is like unto Thee, O God, amongst the gods?"

The Persians, in B. C. 800, had a banner known as the Koah, which was originally the leather apron of a blacksmith by that name, under which he aroused the people and delivered Persia from the tyranny of a despotic ruler. This standard was from time to time embellished with gold and costly jewels, and was considered sacred by the Persians.



ROMAN STANDARDS

Very similar to the Egyptian emblems showing additional ornamental development.

Parthamasiris, King of Armenia, after surrendering his Crown to Emperor Trajan, hopes to be recognized as a subject King.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

At the time of Cyrus they used as their standard a white flag on which was displayed a golden eagle. The figure of the sun was also employed.

The Romans had many standards and they were held in the greatest reverence by the people, who in the temples of the Eternal City guarded with religious veneration these emblems of their sovereignty. In primitive times each company of the army bore a pole with a bundle of hay attached, or circular metal disks. Later the figure of a horse, a bear, a wolf, or other tribal emblem, was substituted. In the time of Marius a silver eagle, with spreading wings and with claws grasping the thunderbolts of Jove, was the emblem of the Roman Republic. This device, so common in various forms in countries of modern Europe, was taken from the Etruscans, who were the first to adopt it as the symbol of royal power. The Roman standards changed with their conquests and each emperor displayed new emblems. Augustus adopted a globe to indicate his rule over the world, and Constantine the cross to commemorate his vision. The Byzantine Emperors adopted the double-headed eagle to symbolize their sovereignty over both the Eastern and Western Empire. The Czar of Russia, as the successor of the Roman Cæsars, displayed a two-headed eagle on his standard. This was first used in 1472, upon the marriage of Czar Ivan the Great to Sophia, a niece of the Byzantine Emperor. It is frequently asserted that

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the double-headed eagle proclaimed the authority of the Czar over Asiatic and European Russia.

The cities of Greece used, as standards in their military campaigns, staffs on which were displayed various devices and emblems. In early times the Greeks bore a piece of armor on a spear; later the several cities used sacred emblems or letters for their particular associations. The Athenians chose the olive and the owl; the Corinthians a pegasus; the Thebans a sphinx, and the Messenians the letter "M." The Dacians carried a standard representing a contorted serpent. According to Homer, Agamemnon raised a purple veil to rally his soldiers, and Livy mentions that Scipio in B. C. 202 was met by a Carthaginian ship "garnished with infules, ribbands, and white flags of peace," etc. It is probable that the Danes when they conquered England unfurled the standard of the raven.





MEDIÆVAL FLAGS



MEDIÆVAL FLAGS were of varied shapes, some long and pointed, others square, some narrow with the length along the staff and many ending in two or more points. The principal varieties used during this period, frequently richly ornamented by embroideries and draperies, were the pennon, the banner and the standard. Guydhommes, banderols, pannoncels, scrolls, streamers, etc., may be considered as minor varieties.

Sir Walter Scott in "Marmion" speaks of ancient forms:

"Nor marked they less where in the air
A thousand streamers flaunted fair;
Various in shape, device, and hue,
Green, sanguine, purple, red, and blue,
Broad, narrow, swallow-tailed, and square,
Scroll, pennon, pencil, bandrol, there
O'er the pavilions flew."

Milton in "Paradise Lost" makes frequent allusion to flags. He refers to a mighty host:

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

"Under spread ensigns moving nigh, in slow
But firm battalion."

and again writes that

"Ten thousand thousand ensigns high advanced,
Standards and gonfalons 'twixt van and rear
Stream in the air, and for distinction serve
Of Hierarchies, orders, and degrees."

also, that Azrael

"Forthwith from the glittering staff unfurled
The imperial ensign; which, full high advanced,
Shone like a meteor streaming to the wind,
With gems and golden luster rich imblazed,
Seraphic arms and trophies."

Shakespeare in "Anthony and Cleopatra" says:

"'Twas a shame no lesse
Then 'twas his losse to course
your flying flagges."

Again in "John" he refers to "These flagges of France", and in "Romeo and Juliet", "Beauties ensigne yet is Crymson in thy lips * * * and Death's pale flag is not advanced there."

The famous Bayeux tapestry, commemorating the Norman Conquest of England depicts in its elaborate needle work, a large number of flags and streamers borne on the lances of the Knights of William the Conqueror. They are small in size and have from one to four points, and bear pales, crosses and roundlets. It is claimed that he used as his standard at the battle of Hastings, a consecrated white banner sent him by Pope Alexander

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

II. Reference is also made to two leopards being displayed on his flag after his conquest of England.

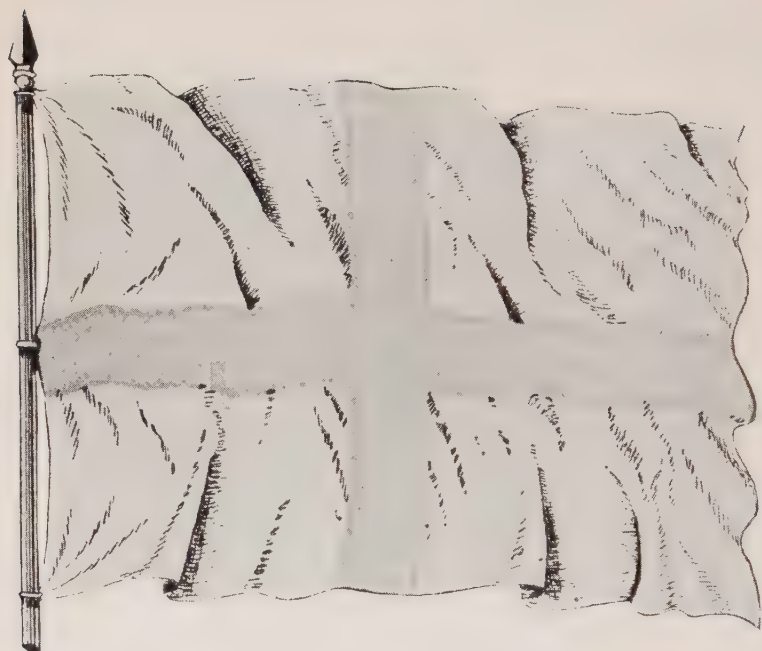
During the crusades, banners and emblems of every description were used to rouse the mail-clad warriors in defence of the cross against the crescent. It might naturally be supposed that the religious enthusiasts in their expeditions to the Holy Land and in their battles with the Mohammedans, carried on their banners the emblem of the cross, but there seems to be no positive evidence to this effect. From the fact that the vast hordes which went to Palestine were not homogeneous either in race or language, and that the numerous contingents looked to the various Princes and Knights who led them, rather than to any central authority, it would appear more than likely that the banners displayed by the crusaders were the flags and standards—usually heraldic in character—of these leaders. Undoubtedly the cross symbol was used in conjunction with their other devices and it seems evident that in addition they carried standards displaying suggestive figures and rebuses to inspire the troops. Many of these mottoes became surnames, and with the devices ornamented the crests of helmets and various parts of the armor. I think it can be safely asserted that the crusaders wore a cross as a personal badge, and this is verified in Proctor's "History of the Crusades" when, in speaking of the council convened by Pope Urban to consider

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the proposition submitted by Peter the Hermit to conquer the Holy Land, he says:—"The figurative injunction of Scripture to the sinner, to take up the cross of Christ, suggested to Urban the idea that all who embraced the sacred enterprise should bear on their shoulder or breast that symbol of salvation. The proposal was eagerly adopted; the Bishop of Puy first solicited the pope to affix the holy sign in red cloth on his shoulder; and the example being immediately followed, the cross became the invariable badge of the profession, while it gave an enduring title to the warfare of the Croisse, or Crusader."

Among the emblems adopted by the early Turkish warriors were those made of one or more horse-tails, the number varying with the rank of the bearer. It is claimed that this custom was brought from Tartary, and that it originated on the occasion when some chief, having lost his standard, cut off the tail of his horse and displayed that instead.

In Christian countries during medieval times, flags were very generally of an ecclesiastical character, the cross naturally being the symbol most commonly used. The followers of Augustine, the Christian missionary to England, carried banners embellished by silver crosses. The flags of St. George, St. Andrew and St. Patrick, depicting the patron Saints of England, Scotland and Ireland,



BANNER OF ENGLAND

1327

CROSS OF ST. GEORGE

(Red cross on a white field)

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

had their origin in religious enthusiasm. Frequently these early ecclesiastical flags were purely pictorial in character, representing Christ, the Virgin Mary, Saints, Martyrs and implements of the crucifixion. For many centuries it was the custom in selecting a military standard to adopt the colors of the Saint in whose intercession the most confidence was placed. These banners often displayed some relic of the Saint, which greatly enhanced their sanctity. The banner of St. Cuthbert of Durham was one of the most famous of the ecclesiastical flags, for victory was considered assured to those who fought beneath its folds. It is described as being made of red velvet, enriched with gold embroidery, and was suspended from a horizontal pole below a spear head. Along its lower edge were five deep indentations; in the center was a square piece of white velvet, upon which was embroidered a red cross. This middle part covered and protected a relic of the Saint, which undoubtedly was the reason for its veneration. The victory at Flodden Field was ascribed to the presence of this sacred banner.

During the middle ages the various guilds and societies had their own special flags and emblems, a custom which has survived to the present day. In this period of religious fervor the Spaniards frequently christened their banners, naming them for the Saints whose assistance and protection they

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

invoked. The custom of seeking Divine support was revived by the colonists of Massachusetts at the outbreak of the Revolution, for we find on the pine-tree flag the motto "An appeal to God." Monasteries and religious orders had their distinctive banners, usually heraldic in character, due to the fact that their members included men of noble birth. These flags when borne to the field of battle, were attended by monks and priests who supplicated the aid of Heaven during the strife.

In a poem on the capture of Rouen by the English in the year 1419, written by an eye-witness of the scenes described, we read how the English Commander:—

"To the Castelle firste he rode
And sythen the citie all abrode,
Lengthe and brede he it mette
And riche baneres up he sette
Upon the Porte Saint Hillare
A baner of the Trynte;
And at Port Kaux he sette evene
A Baner of the Quene of Heven;
And at Porte Martvile he upplyt
Of Saint George a Baner breight."

Few flags of history can rival in romantic interest the red banner, with its eight pointed white cross, of the daring Knights of Malta. The eight points in the Maltese Cross are supposed to represent the eight Beatitudes, and under this emblem

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the valorous Knights of St. John—better known as the “Knights of Malta”,—won their battles for Christianity. The custom of attaching banners to trumpets is a very old one, for we recall the lines attributed to Chaucer:—

“On every trumpe hanging a brood banere
Of fyn tartarium, were ful richly bete.”

From ancient times the dragon has been a favorite emblem for standards, especially among eastern nations. It was used by the Romans as a standard for their cohorts and was probably the device on the banner of Harold at the Battle of Hastings, the Saxons having for many centuries used the dragon symbol. Dryden refers to this custom when he says, “In either’s Flag, the golden serpents bear, erected crests alike.”

Richard Coeur de Lion adopted the legend of St. George and the dragon to typify his exploits in the crusades “to the terror of the heathen beyond the sea.” While based almost entirely upon legends which no historian can clearly verify, the best available information indicates that the origin of St. George as the Patron Saint of England dates back to 1190 when Richard Coeur de Lion visited Syria in one of the crusades to the Holy Land. Near the city of Beyrout he found, and there still exists, an ancient grotto cut into the rock that was famous as the spot where a gallant Knight named George

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

of Cappadocia was supposed to have slain a terrible dragon which was about to devour the daughter of the King of that region. According to popular tradition, this monster for years had ravaged all the country round a city called Selena, making its lair in a marshy swamp. Its breath caused pestilence, and so to appease its hunger and keep it from entering the city, sheep were daily fed to it. When these failed, human sacrifice was necessary, the victims being chosen by lot. On one occasion the lot fell to the King's daughter. In despair the King endeavored to purchase a substitute, offering all his wealth for the purpose, but without avail, for the people had pledged themselves that no substitutes should be allowed; and so the helpless maiden, in bridal apparel, was led to the marsh. There St. George by chance happened to ride by and noticing her, asked if he could assist her. She begged him to leave her, fearing that he also might perish. St. George remained, however, and when the dragon appeared, making the sign of the cross, he attacked it and transfixed the beast with his lance. The King offered the Knight half his Kingdom, but St. George declined all rewards, other than that the people be baptized and accept the Christian faith. This Knight appears to have been the son of noble Christian parents in the Kingdom of Cappadocia and to have suffered martyrdom as a Christian under the Roman Empire on April

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

23rd, A.D. 361. His memory has since been revered in many quarters of the East and particularly by the Greek Church.

Following King Richard's visit to Beyrout, St. George was adopted as the acknowledged Patron Saint of England and regarded as a typical redresser of wrongs, a protector of women and a model of Christian chivalry. In 1222 St. George's Day was ordered to be kept as a holiday in England. The Cross of St. George, known in the East as the Greek Cross, was introduced into the English banner by King Edward I in 1274, after a visit to Beyrout during the last of the Crusades. It was also placed by him upon monumental crosses which he raised at Cheapside, Charing Cross and other places in honour of Queen Eleanor. From the end of the 13th Century, the Cross of St. George and the Dragon is much in evidence in English flags, seals, coat-of-arms, etc. The cross of St. George has become identified with Knighthood and at Windsor Castle the chapel of the Order of the Garter is dedicated to this patron saint. The exploit with the dragon was adopted as part of the insignia of this Knightly Order. Poets and writers have dealt freely with the legend and Spenser in the "Faerie Queen," describing his hero, the Red Cross Knight, says:—

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

“And on his brest a bloodie Crosse he bore,
The deare remembrance of his dying Lord,
For whose sweete sake that glorious badge he wore,
And dead as living, ever him ador’d.”

The tradition surrounding the origin of the Scotch Cross of St. Andrew as a national standard is interesting, though less romantic. According to the legends, the Scots and Picts when about to be attacked by their southern neighbors, prayed to God and Saint Andrew for assistance. As if in answer to their prayer, there appeared in the deep blue sky a white cloud in the form of a diagonal cross, similar to the one upon which St. Andrew is said to have been crucified. Interpreting this apparition as a promise of divine support, they engaged in battle with courage and determination and won a decisive victory. They then adopted the white cross of Saint Andrew on a blue field as the standard of Scotland. This event occurred several centuries previous to the adoption by England of the red cross of Saint George.

Henry III, at the Battle of Lewes, in 1264, fought under the dragon; and according to an old writer, Edward III, at the Battle of Crecy in 1346, displayed a standard “with a dragon of red silk adorned and beaten with fair lilies of gold.” The word “ancient” was formerly frequently used to denote an ensign or standard bearer and in Shakespeare’s *Othello*, Cassio, says, speaking of

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Iago, "the Lieutenant is to be saved before the Ancient." Later the flag bearer was known as "cornet."

For several hundred years the ancient Kings of France carried the blue hood of St. Martin for their standard. The legend associated with this sacred flag relates that St. Martin, finding a naked beggar perishing with cold at the gate of Amiens, divided his cloak or "chape" with him. This cloak, preserved for centuries, was one of the holiest and most valued relics of France, and when war was declared, it was carried before the French monarchs as a sacred banner and always assured victory, it is claimed. The oratory in which this cloak or cape was preserved, acquired in the French language the name "chapelle" and the person entrusted with its care was termed "chapelain," the Priest attached to a chapel in a cathedral. It is from these words probably that our modern English words "chapel" and "chaplain" are derived.

St. Martin's standard was succeeded by the famous Oriflamme of St. Denis. This sacred banner of Clovis, fabled to have been brought to St. Denis by an angel, was originally the banner of the Abbey of St. Denis. It was usually suspended over the tomb of St. Denis, and it is said to have been made of red silk with golden flames embroidered with thread. Five points indented the banner, each adorned with a tassel of green silk. Red was al-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

ways the color of ecclesiastical banners dedicated to martyrs, and such banners were fringed with green; red typified suffering, and green symbolized hope.

Joan of Arc had a white standard powdered over with gold fleur-de-lys, and in the centre a figure of Christ upon a rainbow, holding a globe in his hand. On either side was an angel in the posture of adoration and underneath the words "Jesu, Maria." Another of her standards displayed the Annunciation and the words "Ave Maria." The meaning of the fleur-de-lys has given rise to much controversy. While it was a heraldic device displayed in the armorial bearings of many countries, it is more particularly associated with the royal house of France. That it was used centuries ago is established by ancient carvings and decorations found in India, in Egypt and upon Etruscan bronzes. In the temples of the Nile it is depicted as an attribute of the God Horus, and symbolized life and resurrection.

It is uncertain whether the conventional fleur-de-lys was originally meant to represent the lily or white iris—the flower-de-luce of Shakespeare—or an arrow head, a spear head, or an amulet fastened on date palms to ward off the evil eye, etc. In its relationship to the Kings of France, tradition attributes its origin to Clovis, the founder of the Frankish monarchy, and it is suggested that it

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

represented the lily presented to him by an angel at the time of his baptism.

Another version of the Clovis tradition relates that these lilies were brought from Paradise by an angel to King Clovis in the year 496, on the eve of a great battle fought near Cologne. Clovis is said to have made a vow that if he were victorious he would embrace the Christian faith, and the angel visitant and the celestial gift were a proof that his prayers were heard and his vow accepted. Ancient heralds tell us it was the custom of the Franks at the coronation of a King, to elevate him upon a shield and place in his hand a reed or flag in blossom, instead of a sceptre; and that from these flowers came the armorial insignia of France. It appears, however, quite evident that the fleur-de-lys was used long before the days of Frankish supremacy.

Some writers are of the opinion that it is an arbitrary floral form assumed by King Louis, and is therefore, really the fleur-de-Louis, while others assert that the name came from the river Lys in Flanders, notable for its profusion of yellow iris, and that the flower became known as the fleur-de-lys. One old writer speaks of Louis VII having adopted the purple iris for his emblem upon starting on a crusade to the Holy Land in 1137. A legendary tale ascribes divinity to the fleur-de-lys, claiming that the banner embroidered with the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

golden figures came from Heaven. Another legend is that St. Denis personally bestowed the lily upon the royal family of France, as an heraldic device.

As the belief that France was especially under Divine protection was a very flattering one, the lilies were held in great favour for centuries and the fleur-de-lys did not finally disappear from the flag of France until the downfall of Louis Philippe in the year 1848.

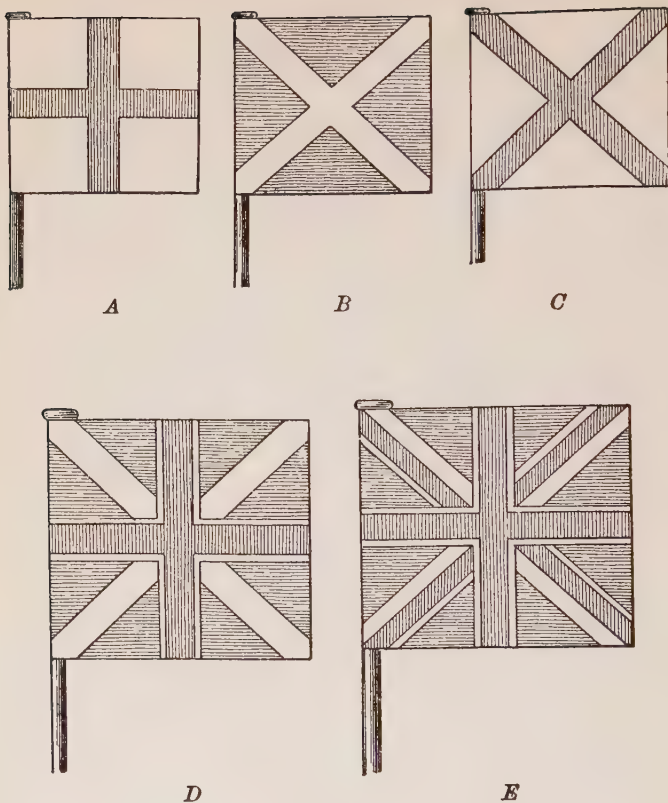
The banner sent to Charlemagne by the Pope was oblong with three points. The standards of Henry VIII of England were long streamers rather than flags as we know them. The patriots of the Netherlands, in their rebellion against the Spanish King in the 16th Century, carried a standard consisting of a patched leather coat similar to those worn by professional mendicants, surmounted by a wallet and porringer. This odd device had its origin in the fact that the patriots were contemptuously called by the Spanish viceroy "beggars," a term used in derision, which they turned into one of endearment. A somewhat similar banner was carried by the Marseilles battalion in the storming of the Tuileries in Paris in 1792. This revolutionary standard consisted of a pair of black silk breeches extended on a cross staff, bearing the inscription "without breeches but free."

To seafaring men it is interesting to recall that the mainsail of a mediæval ship was often em-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

blazoned with heraldic designs and formed one large banner. This custom of utilizing the sails of vessels for the display of emblems indicating individual ownership or affiliation with some central unit, still survives in Venice and elsewhere. The crude flags that represented the common sentiment and the common purpose of states and communities of the distant past, the emblems which inspired the love and valour of generations long since forgotten, have disappeared, but in the untold centuries that have come and gone in the making of human history, there have developed from them the standards emblematic of the mighty nations of today. Time does not permit the description of all these, and they have no relation to the flag that floats over us today, except as an illustration, to show that through all ages and among all races, some flag has been used to inspire men's hearts with confidence, hope and reverence.





THE NATIONAL FLAG OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE— THE UNION JACK

Is a combination of: A—the Cross of St. George for England (a red cross on a white field); B—the Cross of St. Andrew for Scotland (a white saltire on a blue field); C—the Cross of St. Patrick for Ireland (a red saltire on a white field); D—the Union Jack in 1606; E—the Union Jack at the present time.



DEVELOPMENT OF THE BRITISH FLAG

THE ancient standard of England, the cross of St. George, a white flag with a rectangular red cross extending its entire length and breadth, was the emblem usually carried by the English soldiery as early as the fourteenth century, though first used by King Richard I as the British ensign and perhaps by King Richard even earlier "Saynte George, whyche had whyte arms with a red cross. This blessed and holy Martyr St. George is patron of ye realme of England and ye crye of men of warre." It continued to be the national flag until 1605, when James I by proclamation united it with the cross of St. Andrew, a blue flag with a diagonal white cross extending from corner to corner. The combined crosses, representing the union of Scotland and England, made a standard called the "King's colors" or "Union Jack", was to be displayed from the maintops of all British vessels and in addition, ships were to fly flags from their foretops, to indicate from which part of the kingdom them came. Those from south Britain—England

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

—carried the St. George cross and those from north Britain—Scotland—the cross of St. Andrew.

A royal ordinance of April 12, 1605, proclaimed that "whereas some difference hath arisen between our subjects of South and North Britain traveling by seas, about the bearing of their flags,—for the avoiding of all such contentions hereafter, we have, with the advice of our council, ordered that from henceforth all our subjects of this isle and kingdom of Greater Britain, and the members thereof, shall bear in their maintop the Red Cross, commonly called St. George's Cross, and the White Cross, commonly called St. Andrew's Cross, joined together according to a form made by our heralds, and sent by us to our admiral to be published to our said subjects; and in their foretop our subjects of South Britain shall wear the Red Cross only, as they were wont, and our subjects of North Britain in their foretop the White Cross only, as they were accustomed."

As the Mayflower belonged to South Britain, it is presumed that the flags under which our Pilgrim fathers sailed on their memorable voyage were the King's colors and the banner of St. George. The same inference can be drawn in reference to the early voyages to the southern colonies.

Just why a flag should be called a "Jack" has never been determined, and there has been much controversy about it. The most plausible explana-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

tion seems to be that the term is derived from "Jacques", the French word for James, who as King of England and Scotland, ordained that the union between the two countries should be symbolized in a flag to commemorate that event. According to another theory the term is a derivation from "Jaquette"—the word from which came jacket—the surcoat worn over the armour in mediaeval times. While the cross of St. George was usually displayed upon the jaquette, there is no evidence that the symbol of the two crosses in union was ever represented upon it. An interesting article on this subject by Jean Newton recently appeared in the *Washington Star* which I take the liberty of quoting: "In ancient times every English soldier in the field wore the protecting 'jaquette' or surcoat (over all), which was a garment of padded leather interspersed with pieces of plate armour, upon the breast the crimson cross of St. George. When the soldiers had occasion to board a ship, their jaquettes were placed next to each other along the bulwarks of the ship in the same way that the Romans arranged their shields on board their galleys. The jaquettes so afforded the men protection against the arrows of their adversaries on the water, and by this device up on their outer side proclaimed the nationality of the ship. Excepting the King's own ship, which flew the royal arms on a silken sail, the jaquettes bore the only indication of the nationality of a vessel."

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

"In the course of time, when the jaquettes were no longer needed along the bulwarks, a solitary jaquette was displayed at the bowsprit, and so the name 'Jack' came into use for the flag that superseded it. In 1801 the three kingdoms of England, Ireland and Scotland were formally united and the British flag made a combination of the cross of St. George for England, of St. Andrew for Scotland and St. Patrick for Ireland. It was this union which made the British flag the 'Union Jack.' " This writer has evidently overlooked the fact that the phrase "Union Jack" was first used to describe the flag adopted in 1605.

In order to avoid the confusion that naturally might arise over the term "Union" flag, it should be remembered that the word is used to describe two entirely different and distinct flags. One represented the union of England and Scotland and was called the "King's Colors" or "Union Jack", while the other symbolized the union of the thirteen colonies and was variously known as the "Grand Union flag", the "Striped" flag, the "Cambridge" flag, "Congress Colors" and the "Continental" flag.

As the King's colors had been prescribed for ships only, the flag of St. George's cross alone continued to be used by English subjects on land. On the death of Charles I, in 1649, the union between Scotland and England was dissolved, and in 1651 the cross of St. George was adopted by the Common-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

wealth Parliament as the national standard of England. This flag was dear to the New England colonists, who cherished as their own the traditions which surrounded it and the memories of brilliant victories which had been won beneath its folds.

While the Union flag again came into use upon the restoration of the monarchy in 1660, under Charles II, it is probable that the St. George's cross flag, with occasional variations, was the one displayed in the American Colonies until 1707, when Parliament ratified the union of Scotland and England. Under this act by royal proclamation of Queen Anne, the "Union" flag of James I, the "King's colors," was ordained as the banner for all subjects of the British realm "both at sea and land."

As Ireland was not incorporated into the British Kingdom until 1801, at which time the cross of St. Patrick—a red diagonal saltier on a white ground—was conjoined with the other two, the present ensign of Great Britain was never used by the American Colonies.

Flags have always played an important part at military and State funerals, and it is interesting to note the varieties and quantities of flags that graced the funeral ceremonies of Oliver Cromwell. The cost of this funeral is given at One Hundred and Thirty Thousand Dollars, but the unfortunate undertaker was paid little, if anything on his bill of expense. Among the items are mentioned "six great

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

banners wrought on rich taffaty in oil, and gilt; five large standards, similarly wrought; seventy-two pennons; forty trumpet banners, and six hundred pennoncelles."

The famous Meteor Flag of England was a modification of the King's colors, being a red ensign with the device of the crosses in the canton. The phrase, "The Meteor Flag of England" has been a difficult one to explain for the flag does not in any way suggest a celestial meteor. Far more appropriately could the term be applied to the Stars and Stripes, for in it we have the cluster of stars at the head, on a blue background, followed by the streaming bands that in imagination can be likened to a meteor sweeping across the heavens. In fact, Oliver Wendell Holmes speaks of the American flag as "that meteor of the ocean air." The phrase, however, has never been generally used in our country. In a poem "Ye Mariners of England" by T. Campbell, written in 1801, reference is made to the "meteor flag of England" and it may, therefore, be assumed that this expression was first used and applied to the red ensign of the mother country.

It may be of interest to note other flags which were flown on American soil in the days of its discovery and early settlement.



FLAG OF THE NORTHMEN

(Black raven on white field)

Often the Northmen took ravens with them, and when in doubt which way to steer for land, they let loose the birds and followed their flight.

The raven became the emblem of the Northmen and was placed upon their banners.



OTHER FLAGS OF THE NEW WORLD

IF WE accept the possibility of the Norsemen having visited the North American Continent several centuries before Columbus steered his frail vessels westward, then the first flag that ever caught the breezes of the New World was the banner of the hardy Vikings—"a raven, with wings extended and open bill, upon a white ground." Then came the flag of Spain, a banner with four quarters, two of which were red, embellished with golden castles, and two white, emblazoned with red lions. This was the standard of Spain during most of the period of her conquests. Columbus also bore a personal flag, which had been presented to him by Queen Isabella, consisting of a white ensign with a green cross, having on either side the letters F-Y surmounted by golden crowns, (F for Ferdinand and the Y for the initial letter of the Spanish Ysabel or Ysabella). It is stated that Cabot, by reason of his being a Venetian carried the banner of his native city upon one of his expeditions, in addition to the flag of England, whose commission he bore. This

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

was a scarlet ensign bordered by a broad band of blue, impaled by the winged lion of St. Mark holding a cross in his right paw.

The flag Jacques Cartier planted for France on the shores of the New World in 1534 was a blue ensign emblazoned with the golden fleur-de-lys. Later a white flag was adopted by the Huguenot party but it is probable that the Bourbon flag—the fleur-de-lys emblem—floated over the vast territory occupied by the French.

The flag of France—what hallowed associations cluster around that noble banner, as we remember the heroism, the sacrifice and the loyalty of France in the dark days of our struggle for liberty. Washington declared that the remembrance of the generosity of France “must inspire every citizen of the States with sentiments of the most unalterable gratitude.” The memories of one hundred and fifty years ago recall the glories of victory, when the flag of France and the new-born standard of America waved side by side in the cause of human freedom.

Henry Hudson brought the Dutch flag to America when the Half Moon sailed into New York Harbor in 1609. It was a flag with three equal horizontal stripes, orange, white and blue, with the initials “V.O.C.” in monogram, surmounted by the letter “A” standing for Amsterdam, in the middle of the white stripe. The letters “V.O.C.” stood for the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

words "Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie" (United-East-Indian Company)—which financed this maritime enterprise. Afterwards when the colony of New Amsterdam was transferred to the supervision of the West-India Company, the monogram on the flag was changed to "G.W.C." standing for "Geoctroyeerde West-Indische Compagnie" (Chartered West-India Company). In 1650 the orange stripe was changed to red, in accordance with a similar change in the flag of Holland, and this banner waved over the future metropolis of the world until it was supplanted by the flag of St. George's cross in 1664. In July, 1673, the Dutch flag again waved over New Amsterdam, but it was supplanted by the British flag in November, 1674, as the result of the treaty of peace terminating the war between Holland and England. The British ensign continued to fly until November 25, 1783, when the Stars and Stripes was raised in its place. The flag of Sweden—a yellow cross on a blue field—also has a place in our history, as that nation between the years 1638 and 1655, maintained settlements on the banks of the Delaware.





NEW ENGLAND FLAG—1737

(Blue field, red cross on white canton; a globe in upper left quarter.)



COLONIAL FLAGS

IN THE RECORDS of Massachusetts, as early as 1634, mention is made of the use of the flag of St. George's cross. In this connection it is interesting to recall that the stern religionists of Massachusetts objected to the use of the flag of St. George, not from any sense of disloyalty to their Mother country, but for conscientious reasons, because of the cross. To their minds it was a Papist symbol and as the flag had been blessed by the Pope at the time of its adoption, it appeared to these ardent Protestants to call for obedience to the Church of Rome. It is recorded that in November, 1634 or 1635, complaint was made that Captain John Endecott, an officer of the Massachusetts Bay colony, had defaced the flag by cutting out with his sword a portion of the red cross. In justification of his act, he declared that it savored of popery. For this desecration to the flag it is stated he was reprimanded, removed from office, and disqualified to hold a public position for one year. This Captain Endecott was sent to America by the Massachusetts Bay colony of London to take

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

charge of the plantation at the place later called Salem. He was Deputy Governor from 1641 to 1644 and several times Governor between 1644 and 1665. Soon after the incident of the flag mutilation, a number of the militia refused to march under a symbol which to them appeared idolatrous. The revolt was not ended until the Military Commissioners in December of the following year, "appointed colors" for every company, in which the red crosses were eliminated. As Castle Island in Boston Harbor, though the property of the Colony, was maintained in the King's name, his colors were permitted to fly over it. It was not until 1651, however, that the general court of Massachusetts officially sanctioned the use of the flag of St. George's cross.

In the journal of John Winthrop, the first Governor of Massachusetts Bay Colony, it is recorded "That in November, 1633, Richard Brown, of Watertown, Massachusetts, made a complaint, 'That the ensign at Salem was defaced, in that one part of the red cross had been taken out.' Much matter was made of this, as fearing it would be taken an act of rebellion, or of like high nature, in defacing the King's Colors (the flag of St. George), though in truth it was done upon his opinion, that the red cross was given to the King of England by the Pope, as an ensign of victory, and so a superstitious thing, and a relic of Antichrist."

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

At the next term of Court an investigation concerning the matter was held, and the ensign bearer, Richard Davenport, was called before the tribunal to answer for allowing the banner to be defaced. The diary also informs us "That in 1635, a Mr. Endecott was summoned before a general Court, held at Newton, to render account for defacing the cross in the ensign; but because the Court could not agree about the thing, whether the ensign should be laid by, out of regard that many refused to follow them, the whole case was deferred till the next general Court, and the commissioners of military affairs gave orders, in the meantime, that all ensigns should be laid aside." Bishop Fallows states that: "During this period the fanatical opposition to the cross in the banner ran so high that a proposal was made to substitute in its place the red and white roses, which had been the distinguished insignia of the rival houses of York and Lancaster emblazoned on the British national flag, and borne by the two factions in that unhappy civil contest for the throne of England, known as the wars of the red and white roses."

In 1643 the colonies of Massachusetts Bay, Plymouth, Connecticut and New Haven, entered into a defensive alliance "for mutual help and strength", known as the "United Colonies of New England," but no flag was adopted until 1686, when

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

King James II, through Governor Andros, presented one. This flag was white, displaying from edge to edge of the field the red cross of St. George. At the intersection of the two bars of the cross, a crown was depicted with the initials "J. R."—for James Rex—underneath. This flag was modified, and in the design generally used had a red field, with the cross of St. George—initials omitted, in the upper corner next the mast. A tree or a globe was usually represented in the upper canton next the staff. It is conceded that this was the time honored New England flag, although some are of the opinion that the field was blue instead of red.

Long before the smoldering embers of revolt blazed into the fires of the Revolution, nearly every colony had adopted a flag of its own. The Massachusetts flag bore a pine tree; South Carolina displayed a rattlesnake; New York had a white flag with a black beaver, symbolical of her industry and the wealth of the fur trade; and Rhode Island had a white flag with a blue anchor in the center surmounted by the word "Hope."

The Colonists, being accustomed to the red ensign of England with its field of solid color, it is not strange that the flags adopted to symbolize their own aspirations should be in most instances, only modifications of the flag around which clustered memories and traditions of the land from whence they

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

came. One colonial flag had the red field but without a cross in the white canton; another,—the Newbury flag—a green field with St. George's cross in the mast quarter, while still another displayed on a green field thirteen clasped hands in the canton. A famous Continental flag was the red ensign with a pine tree substituted for the cross of St. George in the quarter next the staff. This is the flag shown in Trumbull's painting of the battle of Bunker Hill.

Other devices were employed. The most famous being the pine-tree flag, a white ensign with the motto "An appeal to Heaven" above a green pine tree, and the rattlesnake flag, a yellow banner bearing the significant words, "Don't Tread on Me", beneath a coiled snake. The pine tree was a favorite emblem of colonial days, especially in New England, and it was used in many ways. When the Colony of Massachusetts in 1652 established a mint, the general court ordered that all pieces of money should bear on one side a pine tree, thus bringing into use the famous "pine tree" shillings. In 1776 after the Continental flag came into use, the Massachusetts Council passed this resolution:—*Resolved*, " * * that the colors (for marine service) be a white flag with a green pine-tree and the inscription 'An Appeal to Heaven.' " The growing discontent of the Colonies was productive of numerous devices for flags and banners, the larger number of which were inscribed

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

with mottoes more or less defiant of British authority.

In 1774 at Taunton, Massachusetts, the regulation red "union" flag of Great Britain, with the crosses, was unfurled with the words "Liberty and Union" inscribed upon it. This flag did not suggest a severance from England, but its motto is significant of the prevalent sentiment for liberty of action. The historical value of this banner lies in the fact that it was probably the first to be inscribed with a phrase that was destined to become famous. It was of this banner that Mr. Butterworth wrote his poem :

"The Taunton flowed swift through the shimmering weir,
Past the rock where the Northmen came in from the Bay.
In the forest the red leaves were falling and sear,
Where Annawan perished. The stone church today—
The loveliest church e'er the traveller saw,
With its sentinel pines and its ivy-wreathed tower—
Stands hard by the place where the women in awe
Heard their husbands cry out in that glorious hour,
'We'll defend with our valor, our virtue and our votes,
The red flag of Taunton,
That waves o'er the Green.'"

Though it has no special bearing on the story of the flag, it may be recalled as an interesting side light of history, that on Taunton Green occurred a stirring incident during Shays' rebellion in 1787. It was undoubtedly the turning point in that uprising. A mob of angry rioters, defying the authorities, en-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

deavored to prevent the opening of court. The Judge who was to sit on the bench, General David Cobb, formerly an aide on Washington's staff, acted with unflinching determination and great personal courage. In dispersing the mob he uttered the memorable words: "I will sit as a Judge or die as a General." It can truly be said of Taunton that "Here arose the first Ensign of Liberty; here fell the first Standard of Insurrection."

In New York in 1775 a flag with a red field, charged with the inscription "George Rex and the Liberties of America", was displayed. One of the most popular of the flags that came into existence about this time was the Liberty Tree flag, a white banner with a narrow blue stripe along its upper and lower edges, displaying in the center a green tree, with the words "Liberty Tree" above and "An Appeal to Heaven" below. The frequent use of the phrase "An Appeal to Heaven" in all probability derived its origin from the closing paragraph of an address sent by the Provincial Congress of Massachusetts to the people of Great Britain, which concluded with the sentence "Appealing to Heaven for the justice of our cause, we determine to die or be free."

Let us mention other flags that were used during this stirring period of our history. The Minute Men of Culpepper, Virginia, carried a white flag

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

bearing the name of their organization across the top, and a coiled snake in the center; above which were the words "Liberty or Death" and below "Don't Tread On Me." The flag of Proctor's brigade of Westmoreland, Pennsylvania, still preserved, should also be mentioned. It is made of red silk and displays in the dexter corner the cross of St. George, while in the center is the familiar rattlesnake emblem and motto, encircled by a scroll, inscribed with the initials "J. P." and "F. B. W. C. P." signifying "John Proctor, First Battalion Westmoreland County Provincials." This banner belonged to a company of Pennsylvania patriots, organized in pursuance to a set of resolutions adopted at Hannastown, then the county seat of Westmoreland County, and it was carried in the Battle of Trenton and in other engagements.

A very famous flag used in South Carolina at the beginning of the Revolution was one designed by Colonel Moultrie, of Charleston. It was a blue ensign with a white crescent in the upper corner near the staff. This was the flag which Sergeant Jasper rescued so gallantly when the fort of palmetto logs on Sullivan's Island was attacked by the British on June 28, 1776. It was under this flag that the Declaration of Independence was read to the citizens of Charleston on August 5, 1776. The word "Liberty" was frequently inscribed upon it. Later

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the rattlesnake emblem was used, but when South Carolina officially adopted a State flag, she took this famous blue banner with its white crescent and in recognition of the services rendered by the palmetto logs, placed the figure of a palmetto tree in the center of the field.

It may be of interest to note another flag, the Eutaw flag, to which is attached a sentimental story. Colonel William Washington, a kinsman of General Washington, in 1780 was ordered to Charleston, South Carolina, and while there fell in love with a Miss Elliot. When the Colonel was paying her a visit one day, she learned that his troop was without a flag, and it is related, that she cut off a portion of a large damask curtain, which she afterwards fringed and attached to a curtain pole and presented it to him for a standard. This flag was carried in the Battle of Cowpens and at Eutaw Springs and is now the property of the Washington Light Infantry, of Charleston.

“Unfurl the glorious banner
Which at Eutaw shone so bright,
And, like a dazzling meteor, swept
Through the Cowpens deadly fight.
Sound, sound your lively bugles,
Let them pour their loudest blast,
While we pledge both life and honor
To stand by it to the last.”

A flag which has an unusually romantic history is Pulaski's banner, now in the possession of the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Maryland Historical Society. Count Pulaski, the son of a Polish nobleman, was a soldier of fortune who, at the age of twenty-four, found himself outlawed and his estates confiscated. Early in the Revolution he volunteered in the American Army and in 1778 was commissioned an officer in the cavalry force. Congress authorized him to raise what is known as Pulaski's Legion and this body of troops was recruited in the summer of 1778. The patriotic women of Baltimore presented the count with a banner which had been made by the Moravian Single Sisters of Bethlehem, Pennsylvania. It is of yellow silk, with the letters "U. S." in the center and in a circle around them the words, in Latin, "Union makes valor stronger". On the reverse side, surrounding an eye, is the motto, also in Latin, "No other governs." This banner was carried in the Battle of Savannah, when Pulaski commanded both the American and French cavalry. The poet Longfellow beautifully alludes to this flag sent by the nuns with their blessing:—

"When the dying flame of day
Through the chancel shot its ray,
Far the glimmering tapers shed
Faint light on the cowed head;
And the censer burning swung,
Where, before the altar, hung
The crimson banner, that with prayer
Had been consecrated there.
And the nun's sweet hymn was heard the while
Sung low, in the dim, mysterious aisle.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

"Take, thy banner! May it wave
Proudly o'er the good and brave;
When the battle's distant wail
Breaks the Sabbath of our vale,
When the clarion's music thrills
To the hearts of these lone hills,
When the spear in conflict shakes
And the strong lance shivering breaks.

"Take thy banner! and, beneath
The battle-cloud's encircling wreath,
Guard it, till our homes are free!
Guard it! God will prosper thee!
In the dark and trying hour,
In the breaking forth of power,
In the rush of steeds and men,
His right hand will shield thee then.

"Take thy banner! But when night
Closes round the ghastly fight,
If the vanquished warrior bow,
Spare him, by our holy vow,
By our prayers and many tears,
By the mercy that endears,
Spare him; he our love hath shared;
Spare him; as thou wouldst be spared.

"Take thy banner! and if e'er
Thou shouldst press the soldier's bier
And the muffled drum should beat
To the tread of mournful feet,
Then this crimson flag shall be
Martial cloak and shroud for thee."

The warrior took that banner proud,
And it was his martial cloak and shroud.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Reference should also be made to a banner known as the "Flag of the Bucks of America", a yellow flag with a pine tree in the center. Beneath the branches of the tree stands a deer. The canton is blue, on which thirteen yellow stars are painted. It has been asserted, that this flag was carried in the Revolution by a body of Massachusetts colored troops, and that the banner was presented to the regiment by Governor John Hancock. While, of course, there were negroes in Massachusetts at this time, it seems incredible that there were enough to form even a small company, and I am very dubious about this reference.

The Green Mountain boys at the Battle of Bennington, August 16, 1777, are credited with having fought under a flag that had seven white and six red stripes, with a canton of blue, on which were thirteen stars, one in each of the two upper corners and eleven arranged in a half circle over the figures 76.

Unfortunately, there appears to be little information extant about this flag and the numerous inquiries I have addressed to Vermont Historians regarding it have failed to furnish me its history. There was also the flag of the First Pennsylvania Rifles, described as having "a deep green ground, the device of a tiger, partly inclosed by toils, attempting to pass defended by a hunter with a spear, on a crimson field." Above the lion were the initials

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

"P.M.R." while below was the motto "Domari nolo." This banner was carried at Trenton, Brandywine, Monmouth and Yorktown. The flag carried by the David Morgan corps had at the top a wreath of laurel encircling the date 1776; underneath was the inscription, "XI Virginia Regiment," and below this was the legend, "Morgan's Rifle Corps."

At the Battle of Long Island, August 27, 1776, the American patriots fought under a banner made of red damask on which was the word "Liberty." Major Tallmadge of Connecticut and his daring dragoons on September 5, 1779, captured five hundred Tories at Lloyd's Neck, Long Island. They also took part in the conflicts at Brandywine, Germantown and Monmouth. They had two flags, one pink and the other blue. The first had a pink field, in the center of which was a blue disk with silver wings. From the disk ten golden thunderbolts radiated like the sun's rays. Under this device was a silver scroll with the motto in black letters, "PAT^a CONCITA FULM^{nt} NATL." The canton, bordered by a silver thread, had thirteen stripes formed by six strips of white ribbon sewed to the flag, making with the field, thirteen pink and white stripes. The blue standard had the same device and motto and in addition, above the disk in a scroll of gold, the inscription "2d Regt. Lt. Dragoons." The canton was edged with a gold

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

line and had seven gold stripes painted on the blue silk, which gave the combination of thirteen stripes, alternate blue and gold.

While the Continental army was encamped near New York, a distinct corps of mounted troops to the number of one hundred and eighty was organized to serve as a body guard to General Washington. The standard of this corps was of white silk, emblazoned by the figure of one of the guard, holding a horse. The Genius of Liberty, portrayed as a woman, with one hand resting upon a Union shield near which was an eagle, was represented in the act of presenting a banner to the guard.

The two flags of the Second New Hampshire Regiment are of unusual interest for they were captured by the British a few weeks before the battle of Saratoga and many years later were purchased from the owner by the New Hampshire Historical Society. One has a field of buff with a golden disk in the center bearing the motto, "We are one." Thirteen rays radiate from thirteen rings which surround the disk, each ring inscribed with the name of one of the colonies. In the dexter corner, red and blue triangles form two crosses. The other flag is of blue with a small red shield in the center, with the title, "N. H. 2d. Regt." On a scroll is the motto, "The glory, not the prey." There are two red and gold crosses in the canton.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Another flag used in these stirring times was the one carried by the Richmond Rifles. It had a blue background, embellished with the Goddess of Liberty on one side, and on the other was a soldier in full uniform, supporting a large shield emblazoned with an eagle with outstretched wings. At the base were piled cannon balls and drums defending, as it were, a cluster of Colonial flags.

There were other banners whose emblems and mottoes inspired the patriots in their struggle for independence, which space does not permit me to mention. Most of them have been lost or destroyed; many have been forgotten, but the memories enshrouding them endear them forever in the hearts of those who have followed after.





RATTLESNAKE FLAG

(Representation of a coiled snake about to strike, on yellow field.)

First presented to Congress in 1776 by Colonel Gadsden. There were many varieties of this design, of which the one illustrated was most noted, being used by John Paul Jones aboard the "*Alfred*". This was the first ensign flown on board an American man-o'-war. It is sometimes called the John Paul Jones Naval Flag.



THE RATTLESNAKE FLAG



THE rattlesnake symbol, shown in a variety of designs, was a favorite emblem, especially in the South, and vied with the pine tree in popular favor.

The choice of this strange emblem may have been suggested by the habits of the reptile,—slow to get into a fight and slow to get out of one. One writer in alluding to the rattlesnake emblem, very quaintly says “’Tis curious and amazing to observe how distinct and independent of each other the rattles of this animal are, and how firmly they are united together. One of the rattles singly, is incapable of producing a sound, but the ringing of thirteen together is sufficient to alarm the boldest man living.” From the motto “Don’t Tread on Me”, which was inseparable from the device, I surmise that the true significance of the emblem lay not so much in the rattle as in the bite.

After its adoption as the flag of the Commanding Officer of the Navy, no less a personage than Benjamin Franklin defended the device on the grounds that this particular reptile species is found

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

only in America; that the ancients considered serpents possessed of wisdom and vigilance; that they do not attack without first giving warning and that the number of rattles increases with age,—hence especially appropriate for the anticipated growth of America. The most probable explanation for the choice of this unusual and repulsive design, however, is derived from an article which appeared in Franklin's paper, the *Pennsylvania Gazette*. In April, 1751, a murder was committed by a convict while being transported to America, and the incident, coupled with other murders that had been committed by criminal immigrants, aroused popular resentment and gave rise to indignant protests to the British government against sending convicts to the colonies. A writer to the *Gazette*, in commenting upon the iniquitous policy of the Mother Country, suggested that "A cargo of rattlesnakes should be distributed in St. James Park, Spring Garden and other places of amusement, in retaliation." This method of retribution for the wrongs of America appealed to the popular imagination, and a few years later when the Colonies were in conflict with the French and Indians, Franklin, to impress upon the people the need for united action, published in the *Gazette* the drawing of a rattlesnake severed into eight parts to represent the eight Colonies engaged in the war, with the motto "Join or die."

At the suggestion of Colonel Christopher Gadsden,

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

a prominent citizen of the colony, South Carolina adopted the rattlesnake emblem in place of the blue flag with its white crescent moon. As previously described, the design was a coiled snake on a yellow field, with the slogan "Don't Tread on Me." Without exception, flag historians have stated or inferred that this Rattlesnake flag was presented to the Continental Congress, and I would hesitate to contradict these oft-repeated assertions did I not feel positive that there has been confusion in referring to records. At about the time of the Declaration of Independence, there existed for a few years in South Carolina an extra legal body known as the Provincial Congress. Colonel Gadsden was a delegate to this Congress in 1775 and 1776, and it was to this body that he presented his flag, as evidenced by the following entry in their journal (Force's American Archives, Volume 5, 4th Series) under date of February 9, 1776:—"Colonel Gadsden presented to the Congress an elegant Standard, such as is to be used by the Commander-in-Chief of the American Navy; being a yellow field, with a lively representation of a Rattlesnake in the middle, in the attitude of going to strike, and these words underneath, *"Don't tread on me."* Ordered That the said Standard be carefully preserved, and suspended in the Congress room. Adjourned to nine o'clock tomorrow." On the other hand, there is no mention of the incident in the records of the Continental

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Congress. From these two facts, I feel we can with certainty assert that it was the local Provincial Congress and not the Continental Congress which received the famous flag about which there has been much controversy. The error has undoubtedly arisen from the fact that Colonel Gadsden was at one time a member of the Continental Congress. Colonel Gadsden stated that this standard was designed to be used as the personal flag or "broad pennant" of the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy. It was not intended in any sense to be a national ensign, any more than the blue Navy flag with four stars, flown today by the Commander-in-Chief is the National flag. It was to be the flag of the commanding officer of the fleet or squadron, such officers being known as "flag officers," that is, officers entitled to personal flags. According to the Century dictionary, this broad pennant is "the flag of a flag officer, hoisted on a vessel upon which he is, to denote his presence and command." It was this emblem which was hoisted by John Paul Jones when Commodore Esek Hopkins, the newly appointed "Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet", went on board his flagship, the *Alfred*, in Philadelphia, early in January, 1776, a short time after the ship had gone into commission.

This rattlesnake flag has frequently been confounded with the national ensign—the Continental flag—but it is a mistake to consider it as an emblem

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

representative of the colonies, for there is no evidence to show that it was ever so used. In describing the raising of this flag, John Paul Jones used the expression "break the pennant", a term which would not be used in hoisting the national ensign; it is the term applied when displaying for the first time the "broad pennant" of a flag officer. Jones is credited with saying, "I was always at a loss to know by what queer fancy or by whose notion that device was first adopted. For my own part I could never see how or why a venomous serpent could be the combatant emblem of a brave and honest folk fighting to be free." This, of course, refers to the Rattlesnake flag, the broad pennant of Commodore Hopkins, although it is frequently quoted as evidence that the national flag raised over our embryo Navy was the banner designed by Colonel Gadsden, and not the Grand Union or Continental Flag. These writers have evidently confused the broad pennant with the national ensign.

The *Alfred*, formerly the *Black Prince*, was the first ship purchased by Congress for the Continental Navy, and was placed in commission in December, 1775. Unfortunately her log book has been lost and the flag that represented the Federated Colonies cannot be positively determined. It would appear, however, that the flag which was displayed on that memorable day, was the Continental ensign, although some writers doubt the existence

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

of this flag at that time. Jones claimed the honor of having hoisted it, a claim that has been disputed by some historians. Writing to Robert Morris under date of October 10, 1783, Jones says:—"It was my fortune as the senior first lieutenant, to hoist myself the flag of America the first time it was displayed." In another letter he says:—"I had the honor to hoist with my own hands the flag of freedom, the first time it was displayed on the Delaware." It is not known what flag Jones called "the flag of America", but from reports and letters it appears reasonably certain that he meant the Continental flag with its thirteen stripes cantoned by the British emblem. Whether Jones participated in this event or not, I feel we can reasonably assume that the *Alfred* went into commission under this ensign, and that to the Navy belongs the honor of having first hoisted it. Admiral Preble thinks Jones referred to the Continental ensign and not to the rattlesnake flag. A letter addressed to the Earl of Dartmouth, dated "Maryland, December 20, 1775" says:—"Their harbors by spring will swarm with privateers; an admiral is appointed, a court established and on the third instant the Continental flag on board the *Black Prince* (*Alfred*) opposite Philadelphia was hoisted." In a letter dated New Bern, North Carolina, February 9, 1776, there is this reference to the sailing of the fleet:—"By a gentleman from Philadelphia, we have received the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

pleasing account of the actual sailing from that place of the first American fleet that ever swelled their sails on the Western Ocean, in defense of the rights and liberties of the people of these Colonies, now suffering under the persecuting rod of the British ministry, and their more brutish tyrants in America. They sailed amidst the acclamations of many thousands assembled on the joyful occasion, under the display of a union flag with thirteen stripes in the field, emblematical of the thirteen United Colonies."

That the flag the fleet carried was the Continental flag is further substantiated by the following report which was sent from Philadelphia under date of January 4, 1776:—"This day, about one o'clock, sailed the ship *Alfred* and the ship *Columbus* with two brigs. * * * Hopkins commands the *Alfred*. She has yellow sides, her head the figures of a man, English colours, but more striped. * * * * *

Admiral Preble in his history of the flag, published many years ago, states:—"The proof is certain, however, that the Squadron sailed under striped ensigns." That the fleet displayed the Continental ensign appears beyond question and I feel we can also safely assert that it was above the icy waters of the Delaware, on a cold December day in 1775, that the flag truly representative of the thirteen United Colonies first floated on the winds.

Peppery John Adams writing to Elbridge Gerry,

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

from Quincy, January 28, 1813, in disputing this claim of Jones says:—Philadelphia is now boasting that Paul Jones has asserted in his journal that ‘his hand hoisted the first American flag’, and Captain Barry has asserted that ‘the first British flag was struck to him’; now I assert that the first American flag was hoisted by Captain John Manley, and the first British flag was struck to him.” He also wrote John Langdon, a member of the first Marine Committee, January 24, 1813:—“My recollection has been excited lately by information from Philadelphia that Paul Jones has written in his Journal, ‘my hand first hoisted the American flag’, and that Captain Barry used to say that the first British flag was struck to him. Both these vain boasts I know to be false, and as you know them to be so, I wish your testimony to corroborate mine. It is not decent nor just that these emigrants, foreigners of the South, should falsely arrogate to themselves merit that belongs to New England, officers and men.”

Mr. Langdon replied from Portsmouth, “January 27, 1813, the appointment of Manley and his successors must be well known throughout the United States. As to Paul Jones, if my memory serves me, pretending to say that ‘his hand first hoisted the American flag’, and Captain Barry, that ‘the first British flag was struck to him,’ they are both unfounded, as it is impressed on my mind that many

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

prizes were brought into the New England States before their names were mentioned." I am afraid Mr. Adams permitted his sectional prejudice to master his cool discernment, for while it is true that to Manley belongs the honor receiving the first surrender to our national flag, it was the Pine Tree ensign under which the fleet Washington outfitted, went to sea, and Jones referred to the Contiental flag. Barry's claim rests not on the first surrender to the flag in competition with Manley, but on the first surrender to the Continental banner, two distinct emblems, although both national.

There has been much controversy over the "first display" of the flag, its "first victory," its "first appearance" on foreign soil, the "first salute" rendered it, etc. A large part of the confusion is due to the lack of a proper definition of the term "American Flag." While the various banners used by individual colonies, by groups of colonies, by regiments, by military companies and by private ship owners, were of course, in the broad sense, American, they were not national ensigns and did not represent officially the Confederation of the Colonies or the Federation of the States. There have been but three flags which in my opinion can be considered truly National ensigns. The first was the Pine Tree flag displayed on the ships commissioned by Washington for Colonial use; the second, the Continental Flag with its thirteen

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

stripes and canton of subjoined crosses; and the third, the Stars and Stripes, the only one of the three adopted by legislative enactment.

Admiral Hopkins sailed his fleet to the West Indies and his initial exploit was the capture of New Providence, Bahama Islands, on March 3, 1776. This was the first occasion upon which an American flag floated over foreign territory. From a letter written by a resident of that island, we learn that his ships displayed two colors on that occasion, the Continental ensign and his broad pennant, the rattlesnake flag. The following is an extract from that letter:—"May 13, 1776. The colors of the American fleet were striped under the Union with thirteen strokes called the Union Colonies, and their standard, a rattlesnake, motto:—"Don't Tread on Me."

In this discussion of the rattlesnake emblem, especially in its relationship to the Continental flag which was hoisted over the naval ships in Philadelphia, the continuity of the flag's history has been somewhat distorted, but as there is much confusion in regard to the use made of the Gadsden banner, this lengthy explanation seems justified. To clarify any misconception let it be remembered that naval usage, both of that day and of this, prescribes the display by flag ships of three flags,—the national ensign, flown at the stern or from the peak; the flag of the Commanding Officer, displayed at the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

mainmast; and the jack which flies from the jack staff at the bow when the ship is at anchor or moored to a wharf. The *Alfred* carried all three:—the Rattlesnake flag, pennant of Admiral Hopkins; the Continental or Grand Union flag, the ensign of the Colonies; and when at anchor, the jack,—probably a red and white striped flag displaying a crawling snake.

In passing, let me recall the fact that Commodore Hopkins of Rhode Island is the only officer of our Navy who has ever held the rank of "Commander-in-Chief of the Fleet." The appointment was no doubt due to political expediency for there were jealousies and political feeling between New England and the Southern colonies which had to be placated to insure concerted action in the war then just beginning. As Washington, the Commander-in-Chief of the Army came from the South, it may have appeared to the statesmen of that day a proper balance of influence that there should be a similar position in the Navy for the North. Under the Constitution the President is made "Commander-in-Chief of the Army and Navy." We have had officers variously designated as Commander-in-Chief of the various fleets, such as the Asiatic Fleet, or the North Atlantic Station or the Pacific Station. Recently these last two Stations were consolidated and the Admiral in command of the combined fleets is called "Commander-in-Chief

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

of the United States Fleet." At the same time there exist entirely independent commands such as the Asiatic Fleet with its own Commander-in-Chief, and the Naval Forces in Europe with their Commander-in-Chief, and other minor forces. The nearest approach we have had to a successor to Hopkins was when the Congress made Admiral Dewey, "*Admiral of the Navy*". All other Admirals are Admirals *in* the Navy.

It is sometimes stated that Hopkins, to symbolize the confederacy of the Colonies, added to his broad pennant the emblem of the pine tree, with the coiled snake at its roots, thus combining the Pine Tree Flag of New England with the Rattlesnake Flag of the South, but I can find nothing to substantiate the claim. J. Fennimore Cooper, the novelist and naval historian, however, is of the opinion that this was the flag hoisted by Jones above the *Alfred*. The situation is further complicated by R. C. Sands who in his life of Admiral Jones quotes from an English writer as follows:—"A strange flag has lately appeared in our seas, bearing a pine-tree with the portraiture of a rattlesnake coiled up at its roots, with these daring words, 'Don't Tread on Me.' We learn that the vessels bearing this flag have a sort of commission from a society of people at Philadelphia, calling themselves the Continental Congress." If such a letter was written, the flag referred to was evidently

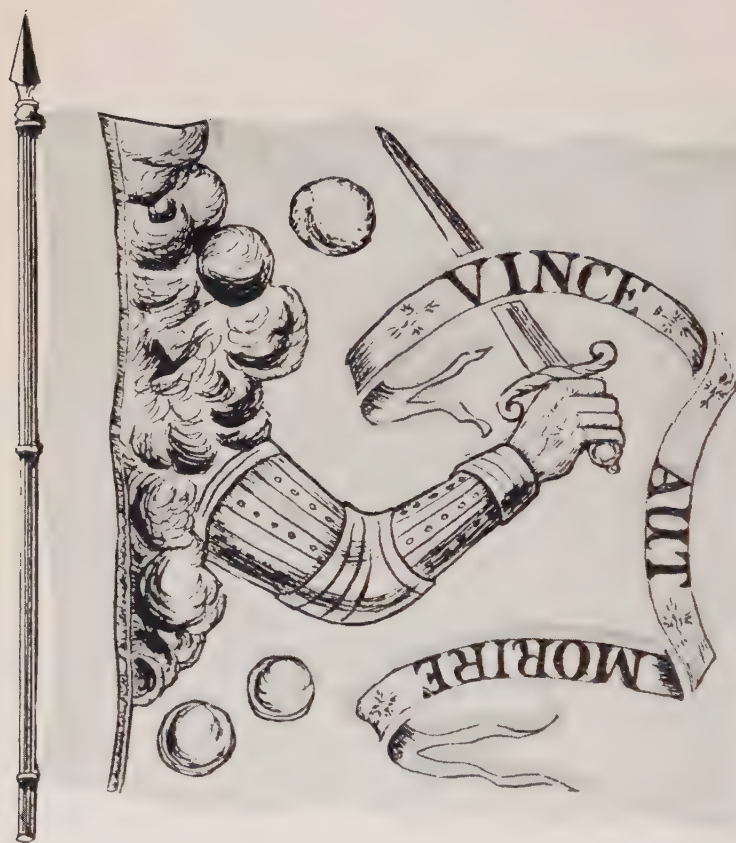
THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the one flown by Massachusetts vessels, for there is some evidence that a flag of this description was used by the cruisers of the Colony after the Continental flag came into general use, although I doubt if such a flag ever existed. One variation of the rattlesnake design displayed the reptile undulating diagonally across thirteen red and white stripes, while another showed the serpent in a similar attitude crawling over stripes alternate red and blue, neither flag having a canton. That this singular device was also used by the marines is evidenced by a letter written by Benjamin Franklin from Philadelphia, dated December 27, 1775. He wrote that he "observed on one of the drums belonging to the marines there was painted a rattlesnake with this modest motto under it: 'Don't Tread on Me.'"

Previous to the establishment of the Continental Navy in the fall of 1775, General Washington on his own initiative purchased and fitted out for the use of the Colonies, two vessels, the *Lynch* and the *Franklin*. He also secured ships from the navies of the New England states. The first one commissioned was the schooner *Hannah*, which sailed from Beverly September 5, 1775, and returned to port two days later with a prize. The *Hannah* was then laid aside and in her place another schooner was chartered "of better fame for sailing." By November 1, four additional cruisers

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

had been added to the fleet, the *Lee*, *Harrison*, *Warren* and *Washington*, and in January following the *Hancock*. These ships were manned by soldiers and marines under the command of army officers acting under instructions from Washington, who derived his authority for procuring and outfitting the fleet from his commission as Commander-in-Chief of the Continental Army, and from orders of Congress which gave him "direction of the Naval Department." On November 29 of the same year, the *Lee* under command of John Manley captured the British brig *Nancy*, loaded with munitions. This incident, already referred to, was the first surrender to the American flag. The flag flown by all these ships, until taken over by the Continental Congress, was the pine tree banner. One of the ships, the *Washington*, was captured and her colors, still in the admiralty office in London, show a green pine tree on a field of white bunting, with the motto, "An Appeal to Heaven." The selection of this device was probably due to the suggestion made by Colonel Joseph Reed to be referred to later. This flag while never officially adopted, was recognized as the emblem of the marine service of the United Colonies.



FLAG OF LEXINGTON AND CONCORD—BEDFORD FLAG

(Gold ribbon, with motto in black letters, and silver armor on red field.)

A flag of this design was carried by the Americans at the Battle of Concord, being without doubt the oldest American flag extant.

Original flag is in the Bedford Court House, Bedford, Mass.



OTHER REVOLUTIONARY FLAGS



UNFORTUNATELY some doubt seems to exist as to whether a standard was carried at Concord on that memorable day, when

“By the rude bridge that arched the flood
 Their flag to April's breeze unfurled
 Here once the embattled farmers stood
 And fired the shot heard round the world.”

I feel, however, that sufficient evidence is in hand to justify the superb lines of Emerson, and the claim that the identical flag is still in existence seems to be well founded. It is the famous Bedford Flag, now preserved in the Public Library of Bedford, Massachusetts. We can safely assert that the Bedford flag, the oldest American flag extant, “and in fact the most precious memorial of its kind of which we have any knowledge” inspired the intrepid patriots at Concord on April 19, 1775. This small, timestained banner carries, woven in its faded threads, the love and veneration of a grateful America. On a red ground, depicted in silver is a mailed arm extending from

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

a cloud, with the hand clasping a sword. Inscribed on a golden scroll is the motto:—"Vince Aut Mori" (Conquer or die.) Three silver disks are also described upon it. This flag was probably made in England for an earlier Military Company. It evidently came into possession of John Page of Bedford, a military man who was cornet, or standard bearer, of his company. His grandson, Captain Nathaniel Page, a Minute man, carried the flag to the fight at the Concord bridge in response to the alarm of Paul Revere, and it there waved above the smoke of that conflict, "the first forcible resistance to British aggression." In "Beneath Old Roof Trees" is this interesting reference to it:—

"The minute men of Bedford had a flag, but I do not presume to assert to any one, that it was a flag planned for this service. We know too well how the yeoman soldiers were organized for service to think of their making any such preparation. Neither Hancock, with his abundant wealth, nor Adams, with his abounding patriotism, had a thought of any standard for the little companies that were being drilled for a moment's warning. They were too busily engrossed with the weightier matters of the times. When Adams, from the heights of Lexington, saw in that gorgeous April sunrise a figure of the future glory of America, it was with no thought that the flag of the republic was to be spangled with

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the galaxy of the heavens. But in the old town of Bedford was the standard destined to be the flag of the minute men of that town."

Some writers have confused this Bedford flag with the "Three County Troop" banner which it strikingly resembles in color and general design, although the latter flag has no inscription upon it other than the words:—"Thre County Trom", evidently a mis-spelling. This flag was carried in King Philip's war by a troop of cavalry organized in the three counties of Essex, Suffolk and Middlesex, Massachusetts, from which it derived its name.

Many writers assert it is questionable if the patriots at Bunker Hill were marshaled under any flag. Benson J. Lossing, however, in his *Field Book of the Revolution*, states that the standard raised on that fateful Saturday, was the time-honored New England Flag, with its field blue instead of red. In the upper quarter was St. George's cross and in the upper canton the design of a pine tree was shown. Mr. Botts, a Revolutionary historian, was evidently of the opinion that the pine tree flag was carried, for in his account of the battle he states that General Warren in endeavoring to rally his men, reminded them of the mottoes inscribed on their banners, on one side of which were the words, "An Appeal to Heaven", and on the other "Qui transtulit sustinet", of which a liberal translation is "God, who transported us will sustain us."

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

In the painting of the battle of Bunker Hill by John Trumbull, produced in 1786, there is displayed a red flag having a white canton with the cross of St. George and a green pine tree,—the familiar New England flag. Admiral Preble, however, does not endorse Trumbull's depiction of the flag and in questioning its authenticity says:—"This cannot be considered authoritative. Painters frequently take a poet's license, and are not particular in the accuracy of the accessories of their paintings." An interesting example of such an inaccuracy is to be found in Leutze's painting of "Washington Crossing the Delaware", December 25, 1776, in which the Stars and Stripes is conspicuously displayed, although the flag had no existence before June 14, 1777. Another instance is found in Powell's "Battle of Lake Erie" in the National Capitol, in which the flag is represented with thirteen stars and thirteen stripes although for twenty years, fifteen had been the legal number.

Shortly after the battle of Bunker Hill, General Putnam unfurled at Prospect Hill, Charleston, the flag of the Third Connecticut Regiment, said to have been presented to the General by John Hancock. This was a red standard having on one side the Connecticut motto, "Qui transtulit sustinet", and on the other "An Appeal to Heaven." This banner was evidently very similar if not identical with the one described by the historian Botta, and there is a

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

possibility that it waved over the breast works at Bunker Hill. One writer with, I fear, more sentiment than logic states that:—"Not a banner had the provincials to raise on that occasion. Some say that a plain white sheet, and others a standard, bearing upon its scanty surface a tree, was seen waving over the redoubt, but I doubt it. The soldiers of Bunker Hill, unlike those in every other battle, needed no starred banner to wave them on, no spirit-stirring fife or rattling drum to cheer them in the fight, nor to drown the cries of the wounded and the dying. They fought for liberty, and their banner was their leader's calico hunting-shirt, and their music the muttering of deep-mouthed cannon and the shrill whistle of rifle bullets." With the many banners that were in use in the Colonies at that time, it is unreasonable to believe that none waved over the gallant band under Warren. It is more than possible that not one, but several flags inspired the provincials on that eventful day, for as one writer says:—"The banners carried were as varied as the troops were motley."





The flag of the United Colonies of America was first displayed in General Washington's camp before Boston, January 2, 1776. The Union was a blue field with the crosses of St. George (red) and St. Andrew (white) conjoined; the flag being composed of thirteen alternate stripes of red and white. This flag expressed the hopes and aspirations of the thirteen colonies which had united for the justice and freedom other Englishmen enjoyed, for they were still Englishmen. It was not until the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, that the colonists entirely threw off their allegiance to Great Britain.

On June 14, 1777, Congress resolved "that the flag of the Thirteen United States be thirteen stripes alternate red and white; that the Union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field representing a new constellation." The new flag expressed the determined resolve of the same thirteen colonies, now become sovereign states, to form a permanent union, and to take their places among the nations of the world. They were no longer Englishmen, they were "Americans".

—Holden's "Our Country's Flag."



THE CONTINENTAL FLAG



THE USE of a particular emblem to symbolize the authority and unity of a nation is of comparatively modern origin, and has been so used only during the last three or four centuries. Previous to that time flags were of a personal nature, or represented some city, community or group of individuals—military, religious or civil. The many local flags of the Revolution are an example of this. It may appear strange that with the growing sense of unity between the Colonies, stimulated by the feeling of resentment against the British Government, no flag was devised to express this sentiment. One must bear in mind, however, that while our forefathers bitterly resented the treatment accorded them by the British King and his ministers, and were determined to resist further oppression, they were still disinclined to sever all ties with the Mother country. Their primary object in entering into an armed conflict was to maintain their rights and obtain redress for their grievances. Although the radicals vehemently advocated com-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

plete separation and discerning men doubtless anticipated it, there were many ardent patriots who hoped that an amicable adjustment of differences could be reached.

In the flag finally adopted, both the unity of the Colonies and the sovereignty of the crown were combined. While expressing a common purpose it indicated not only a desire to retain cherished memories but a willingness to acknowledge the authority of the British Government. It was a flag of protest, not of independence. The origin of that first distinctly colonial flag, representing the federation of the Colonies, is shrouded in mystery. In October, 1775, the Continental Congress, then in session in Philadelphia, sent a committee to Cambridge to confer with Washington on military matters. It has been stated that this committee suggested the design for a flag, but there are no records to substantiate the assertion. Neither in Washington's correspondence nor in the report of the committee to Congress is there any reference to a new flag. That this committee made no recommendation concerning a standard is amply proved by the fact that Colonel Joseph Reed, aide to Washington and secretary to this committee, on October 20, 1775, four days after the committee had left Cambridge, wrote to Colonel John Glover at Salem, who with Stephen Moylan was engaged in outfitting ships for Continental service under instructions from

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Washington, and said:—"Please fix upon some particular color for a flag, and a signal by which our vessels may know one another. What do you think of a flag with a white ground, a tree in the middle, the motto 'An Appeal to Heaven'? This is the flag of our floating batteries." This letter clearly indicates that the committee when it left Cambridge had not determined upon any flag. It is doubtful whether it will ever be known who designed the flag consisting of thirteen red and white stripes with the 'King's colors'—the familiar combination of the crosses—in the canton. As one writer says:—"It is not probable that another instance can be found in the history of nations, where a revolting people placed upon their standard the emblem of the nation against which they were contending." The opinion has been advanced that Colonel Reed suggested the adoption of the Union flag for the army, but there appears no proof of the fact.

One of the earliest instances of the use of the thirteen stripes upon an American flag is found in the banner of the Philadelphia Light Horse Troop. This standard was presented to the company by Abram Markoe in 1775 and is known as the Markoe flag. It was made of yellow silk and both sides were alike. In the center was an armorial design, above which were the letters "L. H." and below the words, "For these we strive." The striking feature of this flag is the representation of thirteen stripes, alter-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

nate blue and silver, placed in the upper corner next the staff. Members of the Continental Congress, were, of course, familiar with this flag, and it is possible that it suggested the stripes displayed in the Continental flag. General Washington, when en route to take command of the Continental Army at Cambridge in 1775, was escorted from Philadelphia to New York by this troop. It is claimed that the Markoe banner was carried in the battles of Trenton, Princeton, Brandywine and Germantown.

PHILADELPHIA LIGHT HORSE TROOP

"OUR BANNER!"

"For fifty years, at fray or feast,
O'er deadly foe or gentle guest,
Triumphantly unfurled!
And FIFTY more our flag shall wave
In Memory of the Good and Brave
Who dignified the world,
And tyranny and time defy
In freedom's immortality."

It has been conjectured that the stripes as an emblem of unity may have been suggested by the flag of the Netherlands, where for many years the combination of stripes had been used to symbolize the union of the Dutch Republic. As early as 1704 the flag used by the Honorable East India Co. of England, strangely enough, consisted of thirteen red and white stripes with the cross of St. George in the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

canton. In a painting of Bombay as it appeared in 1740, a ship of this company flies a striped flag with the double crosses. Another theory is that, as the different grades in the uniformed Continental Army were distinguished by stripes or ribbons, these distinguishing marks suggested the stripes in the flag. Still another very plausible assumption is that the stripes were suggested by an old engraving depicting a column crowned by a liberty cap and resting upon the Magna Charta. Twelve hands, six on each side, in horizontal position, grasped this column, symbolical of the Colonies maintaining the liberties they had inherited. The query naturally presents itself, why twelve colonies instead of thirteen? While it is true that Georgia was not organized as a separate colony until 1732, and therefore it might be assumed that the drawing was made previous to that year, I feel that another explanation may supply the answer and also bring the probable date of publication of the engraving much nearer to the period of the Revolution. Although further reference to this subject will be found in the discussion of the flags flown by the *Bon Homme Richard*, let me state briefly that not until September, 1775 was Georgia represented in the Continental Congress. For this reason the confederacy, previous to that time, was frequently referred to as the twelve united colonies. A vivid imagination could see these hands, and the intervening spaces merge into twelve stripes. A theory

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

very similar to this has been advanced in reference to the snake, cut into sections, that Franklin pictured in his paper at the time of the French and Indian war, and which has a fanciful resemblance to stripes.

Benjamin Franklin has been credited with having advocated the adoption of this striped flag and at a dinner given in December, 1775, which he and Washington attended, Franklin is reputed to have said:—"While the field of your flag must be new in the details of its design, it need not be entirely new in the elements. It is fortunate for us that there is already in use a flag with which the English Government is familiar, and which it has not only recognized but protected. I refer to the flag of the East India Company." While the above is interesting, I have grave doubts of its authenticity. Queen Elizabeth chartered this great commercial monopoly in 1600 and it remained in existence until 1858 when the British Government took over its functions.

My own conclusion is that the flag was not an original design but rather the adaptation of a flag already in existence. This was the ensign of the East India Company, already referred to, whose vessels, by the way, were probably responsible for the Boston Tea Party. In the absence of any authorized flag, it seems plausible that the vessels acquired by the Continental Congress for the nucleus of the Navy should fly an ensign which expressed in its combination design the prevailing sentiment:—

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Colonial unity and British allegiance. As this company, with its prerogatives and wealth, was sufficiently powerful to defy the home Government, it might not have been deemed improper to utilize a flag that represented such a semi-independent organization. Had the flag been designed as an original production, it seems incredible that Congress should have adopted the exact duplicate of a flag already in use and which was well known to many members of that body.

This singular banner, half American, half British, is variously known as the "Grand Union Flag", the "Great Union Flag", the "Striped Flag", "Congress Colors" and the "Cambridge Flag." The latter designation is due to its supposed association with Washington's headquarters at Cambridge. As we speak of the Continental Congress, the Continental Army, Continental currency, etc. it would appear that a more appropriate designation would be the "Continental Flag", for it represented the United Colonies and in this history I have thus termed it. While numerous writers claim that the Continental flag was first displayed on land over Washington's Headquarters, my own opinion is that Prospect Hill in Somerville, Massachusetts, formerly Charleston, is probably entitled to that honor, or at least can share it with Cambridge. A monument erected to mark the spot where this event took place, bears this inscription:—

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

“ON THIS HILL
THE UNION FLAG, WITH ITS THIRTEEN STRIPES,
THE EMBLEM OF THE
UNITED COLONIES,
FIRST BADE DEFIANCE TO AN ENEMY,
JANUARY 1, 1776.”

Evidence discloses the fact that Prospect Hill was the chief flag station of the army, although general headquarters were in Cambridge. In the memoranda of Rufus Putnam, surveyor, made in the fall of 1775 are references to the “Flag Station, Prospect Hill.” Lieutenant Paul Lunt in his camp diary records:—“1775, August 1, Raised the mast that came out of the schooner that was burnt at Chelsea, for to hoist our flag upon, in the fort upon Prospect Hill in Charleston, seventy-six feet high.” William Moody in his diary says:—“1775, August 1, Our people hoisted a liberty pole on Prospect Hill and a flag upon it.” “November 23rd, This morning we hoisted a large new flag on Prospect Hill.” William Carter, a lieutenant in the British Army wrote under date of January 26, 1776, “The King’s speech was sent by a flag to them on the first instance. In a short time after they received it they hoisted an Union flag at Mount Piaga, their citadel.” Mount

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Piaga was the derisive British name for Prospect Hill as shown on maps of British Army engineers.

While the date of the official organization of the army is not positively known, most authorities agree that it was on the first of January, 1776. This is confirmed by a paragraph in general orders issued on that day which states:—"This day giving commencement to the New Army." On January 4th Washington writing to his military secretary, Colonel Reed, said:—"We are at length favored with the sight of His Majesty's most gracious speech, breathing sentiments of tenderness and compassion for his deluded American subjects; the speech I send you, and farcical enough, we gave great joy to them without knowing or intending it, for on that day which gave being to our new army, but before the proclamation came to hand, we hoisted the Union flag in compliment to the United Colonies. But behold! it was received at Boston as a token of the deep impression the speech had made upon us and as a signal of submission. By this time I presume they begin to think it strange that we have not made formal surrender of our lives."

While there does not appear to be any evidence on the subject, it would seem quite probable that the Continental ensign would be flown over the Cambridge Headquarters and nearly all historians are of this opinion. John Fiske states in his

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

"American Revolution":—"The idea of separation from the mother country which in the autumn (1775) had found but few supporters grew in favour * * * The incongruousness of the present situation was well typified by the flag which Washington flung to the breeze on New Year's Day at Cambridge, which was made up of thirteen stripes, to represent the United Colonies, but which retained the cross of St. George in the corner."

George Bancroft, in his "History of the United States", thus refers to the flag situation:—"On the first day of January, 1776, the tri-colored American banner, not yet spangled with stars, but showing thirteen stripes of alternate red and white in the field, and the united red and white crosses of St. George and St. Andrew on a blue ground in the corner, was unfurled over the new continental army round Boston, which, at that moment of its greatest weakness, consisted of but nine thousand six hundred and fifty men." Fiske, however, is not entirely accurate in his description of the flag and Bancroft makes a general statement that the flag was displayed somewhere in the vicinity of Boston. To fortify the argument in favor of the flag's display at Cambridge, Adjutant General Davis states that "National flags are flown at the Commanding General's Headquarters in the field." It does not seem unreason-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

able to assume that this was the custom during the Revolution. However, one must bear in mind that Washington desired a distinctive flag for the troops and therefore may have been averse to displaying over his headquarters a standard which many considered to be the marine flag. Mr. A. M. Cutler, of Somerville, Massachusetts, who has made a careful study of the records, states:—"So far as I am aware there is no contemporary evidence whatever showing the display of this or any other flag at Washington's headquarters during the entire siege of Boston." On the other hand, Mr. T. H. Cummings of the Cambridge Library is of the opinion that the Continental flag "was hoisted over Washington's headquarters in Cambridge, and also was flung to the breeze on the top of Prospect Hill in Somerville on January 1, 1776, to mark the official existence of the first American army."





STARS AND STRIPES

(13 stripes alternate red and white, 13 white stars on blue field.)

Adopted as the flag of the United States by a resolution of Congress, June 14, 1777; resolution establishing this flag was not officially promulgated by the Secretary of Congress until Sept. 3, 1777.



THE STARS AND STRIPES



IT WAS not until the Declaration of Independence, July 4, 1776, that a complete separation was decided upon, but there is no evidence to indicate that this epoch marking event brought under consideration even the suggestion of a change in the design of the Continental flag. It was not until nearly a year later that the first legislation relative to the establishment of a national flag was enacted. On June 14, 1777, the Congress in session at Philadelphia adopted the following resolution which gave birth to the Stars and Stripes:—

“Resolved, That the flag of the thirteen United States be thirteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be thirteen stars, white in a blue field, representing a new constellation.”

Unfortunately the Journal of Congress makes no mention of the member who introduced this resolution or the committee that reported it, neither is there any record of the discussions that undoubtedly preceded the adoption of our national ensign. From the order in which it is incorpo-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

rated in the business of the day, the assumption is that it was recommended by the Marine Committee, and thus the Navy has a very direct and intimate connection with the first Stars and Stripes as it had with the first Continental flag.

Nothing authentic in connection with the circumstances surrounding the creation of a new flag for our infant republic has ever been found. The suggestions that have been advanced regarding its genesis are almost as numerous as the stars that embellish the union. The original feature of the flag was, of course, its blue field with the cluster of stars, and it will probably never be known who designed or suggested this beautiful, distinctive and emblematic feature of our banner. The records of Congress are silent upon the subject and no conclusive reference to it has ever been discovered in the correspondence, papers or diaries that have been examined.

It has frequently been asserted, though without tangible evidence, that the stripes as well as the stars were derived from the coat of arms of the Washington family, which by a remarkable coincidence contains both devices. Beyond that striking resemblance there is nothing to indicate any connection between the escutcheon of Washington and the national ensign. Neither in Washington's records or letters, nor in the published correspondence of his contemporaries is there any allusion to the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

subject. Admiral Chester advances the theory that John Paul Jones, who was in frequent consultation with the Marine Committee in Philadelphia during the spring of 1777, may have suggested the design, but here again we have no proof.

In several painting of the events of the Revolutionary period the flag is shown with the stars arranged in a circle, but there is no evidence that the National ensign was ever so carried. The paintings as a rule were not made until long after the events they portray and there is no claim to accuracy of detail, as their principal appeal is to sentiment rather than truth. Both North Carolina and Maryland adopted as their State flags certain modifications of the National colors with different arrangements of stars and stripes, specimens of which still exist. That of Maryland, now preserved in the State House at Annapolis, was borne by the Third Maryland Regiment at the battle of Cowpens, January 17, 1781. It has a union of twelve stars arranged in a circle about a thirteenth star in the center.

It is claimed in popular tradition that the honor of making the first flag combining the Stars and Stripes belongs to Betsy Ross, a Quaker upholsteress and flag maker who lived in Arch Street, Philadelphia. It is asserted by her descendants that Congress appointed a committee composed of General Washington, Robert Morris, and George Ross,

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the latter an uncle of Mrs. Ross's late husband, who called upon her in May or June, 1776, and commissioned her to make a flag from an imperfectly drawn design embodying the stripes and the union of thirteen six-pointed stars.

As the six-pointed stars were peculiar to the British, it is said Mrs. Ross suggested that a star of five points would be more symmetrical and appropriate and the committee at once adopted the new design. While this story is interesting and I hope may be well founded, there is no evidence to support it. It rests on the traditions of the Ross family and upon affidavits made by Mrs. Ross's descendants as to their understanding of the particulars as related by Mrs. Ross herself, or by those to whom she told the story. Unfortunately the annals of Congress make no reference to the appointment of a flag committee, nor any reference to a report from such a committee; yet so important a matter must have been under consideration previous to the final adoption of the flag. In Washington's correspondence and writings no mention is made of a visit to Mrs. Ross's house or when or by whom the first flag was made. Neither do any of the historians of the Revolutionary period or any contemporaneous writers, so far as I have been able to discover, throw light upon the subject. The principal argument against the story has been that the flag evidently was not used dur-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

ing any portion of 1776 and was not adopted until a year after Mrs. Ross is supposed to have made it. It is further stated by those who discredit the story that Washington, when he caused the Declaration of Independence to be read to his troops in New York, on July 10, 1776, would have raised this new flag, had such a flag been in existence, instead of the Continental banner, which was unfurled. However, those who have had experience in congressional matters will not be convinced by the argument of delay in adopting the new flag, for if Mrs. Ross made the flag, it is not probable that Washington or anyone else would have used it until Congress had approved it.

Had the sample flag been made by Mrs. Ross in June 1776, it must be admitted that it is strange indeed that we find nowhere any trace or mention of it. In the Pennsylvania archives there is a letter written by Captain William Richards on October 15, 1776, to the Committee of Safety of Pennsylvania in which he says:—"The Commodore was with me this morning, and says that the fleet has no colors to hoist if they should be called on duty. It is not in my power to get them until there is a design fixed on to make the colors by." "This letter" according to Mr. Runk, author of "The Birth of our Flag," "written four months after June 1776 when it is claimed that Mrs. Ross's design was approved by Congress,

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

would seem conclusive against her claim. It is regrettable if this judgment overthrows any childhood traditions or local pride that any reader cherishes, but reverence for the truth compels acquiescence in the impartial verdict of the best American historians." While the communication is interesting, it throws little light upon the subject, for it refers to the Pennsylvania and not to the Continental Navy, and it is more than possible that Captain Richards sought a distinctive ensign for these State vessels, for it must be remembered that Philadelphia was at that time quite familiar with the Continental flag which had been hoisted on Admiral Hopkins' fleet several months previous.

As the Ross family were evidently engaged in the business of awning and flag making, it is quite likely that many of our early national flags were made by this commercial concern. That this family were flag makers is amply proved by the following extract from the minutes of the Pennsylvania State Naval Board:—

"STATE NAVY BOARD

May 29, 1777.

"Present:

*William Bradford, Joseph Marsh,
Joseph Blewer, Paul Cox.*

"An order on William Webb to

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

*Elizabeth Ross, for fourteen pounds,
twelve shillings, and two pence, for
making ship's colours, &c. put into
William Richards store. £14. 12.2."*

I regret to question the authenticity of this picturesque story, yet in candor I feel compelled to state that to ascribe to Mrs. Ross the credit for having suggested any part of the design, or of having received a delegation of prominent men with whom she consulted regarding the flag is one of the sentimental legends surrounding the origin of the flag which appears to have no historical foundation.

A more authentic, personal connection with the design of the flag is found in the official records concerning Francis Hopkinson, a delegate to Congress from New Jersey and a member of the Marine Committee. He was one of a committee of three to "execute the business of the Navy under the direction of the Marine Committee." That he was a designer is evidenced by a letter to the Board of Admiralty in which he says, among other things:—"I have with great readiness upon several occasions exerted my small abilities in this way for the public service, as I flatter myself, to the satisfaction of those I wish to please, viz:—The flag of the United States of America; four devices for the Continental currency; a seal for the Board of Treasury, etc. For these services I have as yet

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

made no charge, nor received any recompense. I now submit it to your Honour's consideration whether a quarter cask of the public wine will not be a proper and a reasonable reward for these labors of fancy and a suitable encouragement to future exertions of the like nature." Later he submitted another account containing the above items together with others, including "the great naval flag of the United States." This time he asked for \$2,700.00 compensation. In rendering a third bill he throws an interesting light on the finances of the times, for he says:—"The charges are made in hard money, to be computed at fifty for one in Continental." The bill was never paid and we have no means of ascertaining the nature of all the designs executed, but it may be that in his fertile brain originated the union of the stars. If this should prove the case, then it is possible that his own coat of arms with its three stars, suggested the design for the "new constellation."

The selection of the stars as a device for the national flag may have been inspired by a piece of poetry published in the *Massachusetts Spy*, of Boston, on March 10, 1774, on the anniversary of the Boston Massacre:—

"A ray of bright glory now beams from afar,
The American ensign now sparkles a star
Which shall shortly flame wide through the skies."

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

To these few lines is ascribed the cause "of a flag being made in 1775 by a patriotic vessel owner of Massachusetts, having thirteen white stars in a blue union, the body of the flag being white, with an anchor upon it having over the top the word 'Hope'. It was hoisted on the armed schooner *Lee*, Captain John Manley." Assuming the correctness of this statement, then Manley apparently carried this flag in addition to the Pine Tree ensign already alluded to; not an unusual thing, for great latitude was evidently allowed ship masters in the display of flags. As Rhode Island had already adopted the design of the anchor surmounted by the word "Hope" it is not probable that a ship owner of Massachusetts would have used, even in part, the emblem of a rival colony.

It is only fair to state that some historians maintain that the colonial flag of Rhode Island was frequently designated by a canton of blue, on which were displayed thirteen white stars. March 1777 has been mentioned as the date of the adoption of this flag, but I have been unable to verify it. If such was the case, as appears probable, then this striking design may have been the source of the adoption of the stars in our national ensign, but I can find no conclusive evidence on the subject. There does seem to be substantial reason to believe that the flag carried by the First Rhode Island Regiment at the Battle of the Brandywine and dur-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

ing the siege of Yorktown was similar to the flag just described. But as these engagements took place after the adoption of the Stars and Stripes, they furnish no proof of the earlier use of the stars. In a pamphlet issued by the Rhode Island Historical Society the following information is given:—
"Rhode Island sent two regiments into the Revolution, and the distinctive regimental flags in a tattered and battle-scarred condition are preserved at the State House in Providence. These flags were made of silk, and had a white field which has turned yellow with age. One of these flags has a blue canton containing thirteen white stars and in the lower part of the field is a blue scroll with an inscription in white letters "R. ISLAND REGT." The canton in this flag is said to have given the idea for the similar canton that was adopted as part of the national flag.

The other flag also has a blue canton containing thirteen stars, but these stars are gold. In the field of the flag is a light blue foul anchor, the cable being dark blue, and above the anchor are four holes in the flag where the motto 'HOPE' has been removed. The motto was probably also blue."

In response to an inquiry regarding these flags, the Librarian of the Society informs me that, "I have never been able to get any definite information as to the date that these flags were adopted."

How slowly the new flags came into general use,

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

even on public ships or fortifications, is shown by the following:—In a report written by an officer on board the privateer “Cumberland,” early in 1779, in alluding to the flag of that vessel, is this sentence:—“At this time we had no national colors, and every ship had the right, or took it, to wear what kind of fancy flag the captain pleased.” The diary of a surgeon in the British army stationed in Charleston harbor, under date of April 3, 1780, records:—“In the evening I walked across James Island, saw the American thirteen-striped flag displayed on the works opposite the shore redoubts, and two other flags displayed in their new works. Their great battery had the American flag of thirteen stripes displayed. This, up to this day, had been a blue flag with field and thirteen stars. The other flag never hoisted until today.”

The first legislative action of which there is any record establishing a national flag for the sovereign United States of America, declared independent July 4, 1776, was the resolution of June 14, 1777. It proclaimed the official birth of a new constellation as the symbol of their union. Thus was born the Stars and Stripes, which through the ages shall be the emblem of liberty and justice for all mankind. In the words of the late Mr. Justice Harlan of the Supreme Court:—

“To every true American the flag is the symbol of the Nation’s power, the emblem of freedom in its

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

truest, best sense. It is not extravagant to say that to all lovers of the country it signifies government resting on the consent of the governed, liberty regulated by law; the protection of the weak against the exercise of arbitrary power; and absolute safety for free institutions against foreign aggression."

The following description has been frequently referred to as a quotation from Washington's writings but it is not to be found among those extant and I question its authenticity:—"We take the star from heaven, the red from the mother country, separating it by white stripes, thus showing that we have separated from her, and the white stripes shall go down to posterity representing liberty."

It has been said that—"Every nation has its symbolic ensign in their banners. Our fathers chose the Stars and Stripes, the red telling of the blood shed by them for their country, the blue of the heavens and their protection, and the stars of the separate States embodied in one nationality, *E pluri-bus unum*. The stars of the new flag represent a constellation of States rising in the west. The idea was taken from the constellation *Lyra*, which in the hands of *Orpheus* signified harmony. The blue of the field was taken from the edges of the *Covenanter's* banner in Scotland, significant also of the league and covenant of the United Colonies against oppression, incidentally involving the virtues of vigilance, perseverance, and justice. The

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

stars were disposed in a circle, symbolizing the perpetuity of the Union, the ring like the circling serpent of the Egyptians signifying eternity. What eloquence do the stars breathe when their full significance is known: A new constellation, union; perpetuity; a covenant against oppression; justice, equality, subordination, courage, and purity."

I doubt if these poetic and fanciful descriptions, however, have any basis other than the imagination of the writer, although Congress in wording the flag resolution, in referring to the union with its stars "representing a new constellation," may possibly have had in mind some celestial body. *Lyra* has been suggested, for the lyre or harp was used among the ancients as the symbol of harmony and unity among men. It is a northern constellation and contains thirteen stars.

The late Charles Francis Adams, in a letter written in 1852, says that his father, President John Quincy Adams, suggested a design for passports in which the lyre was introduced as a companion emblem with the eagle. John Adams was chairman of the War Board when the law establishing the Star Spangled Banner as the national flag was passed by Congress, and he is generally credited with being the member who stood up in the Continental Congress on that memorable day, June 14, 1777, and called for the adoption of the resolution. If his son, John Quincy Adams, had

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

in mind this beautiful conception of Lyra as "a symbol of harmony among nations," when he caused the harp to be placed on the passports of the United States, as tradition asserts, it may well be conceived that his father was the originator of the idea, since he so strongly advocated the adoption of stars for the union of the flag, to represent "a new constellation."

While such a sequence of events would give definite meaning to the phrase "representing a new constellation", which was embodied in the law establishing the American flag, unfortunately the design credited to John Quincy Adams did not appear until several years after the close of his administration. That the lyre was once used in conjunction with the eagle is substantiated by Mr. Gaillard Hunt in his "History of the American Passport" when he says:—"In 1833 appeared a large, engraved passport, about one-third smaller than the one now in use. The effigy at the top is a displayed eagle, his head turned to the left, bearing upon his breast a lyre. Thirteen stars surround the eagle, and thirteen stars of varying magnitude forming the constellation Lyra, are upon the lyre and the eagle's breast and wings." From this it would appear that even though the tradition of the Adams family in reference to the lyre may not be entirely sustained, it is quite evident that the con-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

stellation Lyra was once associated with the stars in our national ensign.

While we speak of the Red, White and Blue in terms of special endearment and with a feeling that they apply exclusively to the Stars and Stripes, in point of fact this effective combination of colors is used by other nations and is very old. In the Jewish Tabernacle at Mount Sinai the curtains were said to be of blue, purple, scarlet and white, and the cloth of the Shewbread Table was scarlet, white and blue. In recording the colors used by the ancient Hebrews and their resemblance to the red, white and blue of our flag, it is necessary to separate from them the purple which is associated with the Jewish colors. This is done effectively by setting apart the imperial and sacred purple as the emblem of Jehovah's majesty, or by pointing out the fact that purple is itself a mingling of blue and red. In the Bible we find these references:—

“And every wise hearted man among them that wrought the work of the tabernacle made ten curtains of fine twined linen, and blue, and purple, and scarlet: with cherubims of cunning work made he them.” Exodus 36:8. “And he made an hanging for the tabernacle door of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. Ex. 36:37. “And he made the ephod of gold, blue, and purple, and scarlet, and fine twined linen. And they did beat the gold into thin plates, and cut it into

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

wires, to work it in the blue, and in the purple, and in the scarlet, and in the fine linen, with cunning work." Exodus 39:2, 3. "And he made the robe of the ephod of woven work, all of blue. And there was an hole in the midst of the robe, as the hole of an habergeon, with a band about the hole, that it should not rend. And they made upon the hems of the robe pomegranates of blue, and purple, and scarlet, and twined linen." Exodus 39:22, 23, 24. (Solomon's Temple) "And he made the vail of blue, and purple, and crimson, and fine linen, and wrought cherubims thereon." II Chronicles 3:14.

As crimson is red with a tinge of blue, fanciful persons may see, in the change from scarlet to crimson that took place in the interval between Moses and Solomon, the beginning of a process by which the purple disappeared by having its elements absorbed into its originals, blue and red, leaving traces in the enrichment of both. Red is associated with strength and zeal; white denotes purity and clearness of life; and blue stands for loyalty, justice and truth,—“true blue.” Taken from the heavens, a star signified dominion and sovereignty, a symbol frequently used in ancient India, Persia and Egypt.



THE STARS AND STRIPES IN ACTION



WHILE the flag was adopted June 14, 1777, it was not until September 3rd following that Congress officially promulgated the design. The honor of first displaying the Stars and Stripes in battle belongs to the State of New York, when on August 3, 1777, an improvised flag was raised on the northeast bastion of old Fort Stanwix, or Schuyler as it was sometimes called, the site of the present city of Rome. Anticipating an attack by the British, a garrison of some five hundred and fifty soldiers, under the command of Colonel Peter Cansevoort, Jr. with Lieutenant Colonel Marinus Willett second in command, had been placed in the fort. On August 2nd, the garrison was reinforced by about two hundred men of the Ninth Massachusetts Regiment, led by Lieutenant Colonel Mallon. This detachment brought news of the recently enacted flag statute, and as the garrison was without a standard the fort was ransacked for material of which to make the new flag. According to accounts, shirts were cut up to form the white stripes, a woman's petticoat sup-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

lied the red, while the blue ground for the stars was taken from a cloak belonging to Captain Abraham Swartwout, of Dutchess County, who was then in the fort. This account is confirmed in part by a letter from Captain Swartwout to his commanding officer, asking for an order on the paymaster to reimburse him for the loss of his cloak. I understand that there are vouchers extant showing that the Continental Congress honored the requisition. The narrative of Colonel Willett, however, gives a somewhat different version of the story. He says:—"The white stripes were out of ammunition shirts, the blue out of the camlet cloak taken from the enemy at Peekskill, while the red stripes were made of different pieces of stuff procured from one and another of the expedition."

Howsoever the flag was made, it was the Stars and Stripes that floated over the brave Americans from August 3rd to August 22nd, when the siege was raised. John Fiske, the eminent historian, further substantiates the claim that to New York belongs the honor of having first unfurled the Stars and Stripes in battle when he says, speaking of the flag:—"Hastily extemporized out of a white shirt and an old blue jacket and some strips of red cloth from the petticoat of a soldier's wife, this was the first American flag with Stars and Stripes that was ever hoisted."

Delaware also claims the distinction, maintaining

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

that the flag was first raised in battle at Cooch's bridge, near Wilmington, on September 3, 1777. The claim is based on the presumption that the American forces had a flag at that time, and even though they had, this skirmish took place a month after the flag on Fort Stanwix had been unfurled to the breeze. One of the local Delaware historians, Judge Conrad, defeats his own contention when he says:—"On August 2, 1777, a short skirmish or rally occurred at Fort Schuyler, New York, in which the Americans floated a rudely devised flag, intended to represent the ideas embodied in the resolve of Congress, and all historians agree that the flag floated on that occasion was merely an improvised one, and in no sense a complete and regular flag of the United States."

The absurdity of Mr. Conrad's theory is dismissed by Mr. Edward H. Hall, secretary of the American Senate and Historical Preservation Society, who says:—"Thus the 20 days' siege at Fort Schuyler, so courageously and successfully resisted, is dismissed by Mr. Conrad as a short skirmish or rally, and the fine distinction drawn between a heroic siege, with all its terrors and possible starvation and barbarous massacre, and a morning's skirmish at Cooch's bridge between two small bodies of troops formally drawn up in line of battle. I do not know of any historian who says that the Fort Schuyler

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

flag was not 'complete', although they do agree that it was improvised."

The Stars and Stripes first went into action upon the sea on September 4, 1777, and the victory won at the close of that day was an auspicious augury for the triumphs and the glories which were to shed their luster on the American Navy in the years to follow. To Captain Thompson, in command of the *Raleigh* and *Alfred* belongs this honor, when he captured the *Nancy* of the Windward fleet. He records the engagement:—"We up sails, out guns, hoisted continental colors and bid them strike to the thirteen United States." His reference to the Continental colors was undoubtedly an error, due to the fact that the new flag had only just come into use.

Despite the often repeated statements that the Stars and Stripes was borne by the Continental soldiers in a number of the later engagements of the Revolution, there is grave doubt of this being the case. In fact, one historian, R. C. B. Thruston, of Kentucky, a very accurate writer, puts the first regular display of the National flag by the army as late as 1787 or 1789, and it was not in general use by our land forces until the Mexican war. The army contingents carried usually only their own regimental colors, although as in the case of the Third Maryland Regiment at Cowpens, they may have occasionally displayed the national ensign, but this use was personal, not official. Later they carried blue stan-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

dards emblazoned with the the coat of arms of the United States.

In 1783 the secretary of the War Board wrote that no standard for the troops had been adopted. The reason that the Stars and Stripes was not carried by our soldiers in the Revolution is due no doubt to the feeling that it was the Marine flag, a designation often employed. Washington himself requested a flag for troops as "variant from the Marine flag." A prominent flag historian states that it was the navy of the United States for which the American flag was established, and not the army as is generally supposed. The land forces belonged to the States and carried state flags into battle throughout the war. On the other hand, it was necessary from the very beginning of hostilities for the ships of the navy to be represented on the sea by a distinguishing flag of national character, in order to exempt them from the charge of piracy. The desire to have a different design for army use is also attributable to the fact that the British Army and Navy flags were different.

The assertion is made that Washington suggested for the army a striped flag with the union of the stars in the center. There is preserved in the chapel on Governors Island, New York, the first official flag carried by the army, but it was not used until after the termination of the war. It has a blue field with what was evidently the National coat of arms in the center.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

In reference to the use of the National ensign by regiments in the field, let me quote from a statement made by the Smithsonian Institution:—"It seems, that for many years, the Army did not carry the Stars and Stripes in battle, though it had been in general use as a garrison flag. The land forces, during this period and before, carried what was known as national colors or standards of blue, with the coat of arms of the United States, comprising an eagle surmounted by a number of stars emblazoned thereon, with the designation of the body of troops. In 1834 War Department regulations gave the Artillery the right to carry the Stars and Stripes. The Infantry and Cavalry still used the national standards, which remained the colors of the Infantry until 1841 and of the Cavalry until 1887, when that branch of the Army was ordered to carry the Stars and Stripes. From its adoption in 1777, however, naval vessels universally displayed the national flag."

Mr. Gherardi Davis, in his monumental work, "The Colors of the United States Army," says:—"After the adoption by Congress in June, 1777, of the United States flag, the Stars and Stripes appear to have been very generally used at sea. But this flag does not seem to have been adopted generally by the Army."

Mr. Thruston also states:—"That the flags or colors made by the War Department for the Army were in the hands of the field commissary stores but not

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

distributed till March, 1783. The war was then over. So we now know that the entire Revolutionary War was fought through without the Army being furnished any flags by the Government. Those they did use were made by the ladies for some company, battalion, or officer."

Mr. C. B. Runk says:—"The Stars and Stripes were not officially carried by troops in battle until the Mexican war of 1846. Our land forces carried previously standards of blue, with the coat of arms of the United States, comprising an eagle, surmounted by a number of stars, with the designation of the body of troops."

Sargeant Schopper, in charge of the ordnance museum at West Point, is of the opinion that:—"The Stars and Stripes were not commonly carried by troops during the Revolution; and in the few isolated cases where it is claimed that they were, they were privately made and not issued by the Board of War."

The official correspondence of General Washington shows that it was not until several years after the adoption of the Stars and Stripes, that the War Board obtained material to make national colors for the Army, "as variant from the marine flag." While this evidence shows that the Government did not furnish the national ensign to troops in the field, it does not prove that the Stars and Stripes was never displayed, for it is evident that in a few cases

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

flags privately made were presented to different companies, which were true representations of the national flag, although not official.

Preble in his history states that "Beyond a doubt, the thirteen stars and thirteen stripes were unfurled at the battle of Brandywine, September 11, 1777, eight days after the official promulgation of them at Philadelphia, and at Germantown on the 4th of October following, they witnessed the operations against and the surrender of Burgoyne after the battle of Saratoga, October 17, 1777, and the sight of this new constellation helped to cheer the patriots of the army amid their sufferings around the camp fires of Valley Forge the ensuing winter. They waved triumphant at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown, September 19, 1781; looked down upon the evacuation of New York, November 25, 1783, and shared in all the glories of the later days of the Revolution." While he does not state that these flags were used officially by the army, yet the natural inference derived from this statement is that the Stars and Stripes was so used by troops in the field. A more thorough investigation of army records than that made by Preble discloses that he was mistaken in his opinion, except as it pertained to garrison flags, and to regimental standards.

It is highly probable that the Stars and Stripes was hoisted over New York City on the day that

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Sir Guy Carleton withdrew his troops, and an amusing account is given of the incident of the flag displayed by the wife of a tavern keeper named Day:—"The late Dr. Alexander Anderson, the pioneer wood-engraver in America, related to me the following amusing incident of that evacuation-day. He was then a boy between eight and nine years of age, having been born three days after the skirmishes at Lexington and Concord. He was living with his parents in Murray street, near the Hudson River, then sparsely settled. Opposite his father's dwelling was a boarding-house kept by a man named Day, whose wife was a large, stout woman and zealous Whig. On the morning of evacuation-day, she ran up the American flag upon a pole in front of her house. The British claimed possession of the city until twelve o'clock at noon, and this act was offensive to them. Early in the forenoon, when young Anderson was on his father's stoop, he saw a burly, red-faced British officer, in full uniform, coming down Murray street in great haste. Mrs. Day was sweeping in front of her door, when the officer came up to her in a blustering manner, and in loud and angry tones ordered her to haul down the flag. She refused, when the officer seized the halyards to pull it down himself. Mrs. Day flew at him with her broomstick and beat him so furiously over his head that she made the powder fly from his wig. The officer stormed and swore, and

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

tugged in vain at the halyards, which were entangled; and Mrs. Day applied her weapon so vigorously that he was soon compelled to retreat and leave the flag of the valiant woman floating triumphantly in the keen morning breeze. The British officer was the infamous provost marshal of the army, William Cunningham, who, for seven years, had cruelly treated American prisoners under his charge in New York, and terribly oppressed some of the few Whig families who remained in that city. This inglorious attempt to capture the colors of the Day stronghold and the result, was the last fight between the British and Americans in the Old War for Independence." Barnum, the great show man, claimed that this flag properly authenticated, was for a long time exhibited in his American museum and was destroyed when that building was burned.

That there was not a general use of the National colors in the early days of its history, is evidenced in two of Peale's portraits of Washington which show in the background only plain white flags with blue cantons displaying thirteen white stars. Peale was one of the few artists who was accurate in the portrayal of details.

Buell in his life of John Paul Jones records that the captain displayed the Stars and Stripes on the *Ranger*, then being fitted out at Portsmouth, on the 4th of July 1777, "making a trip from Boston to Portsmouth for that special purpose." Buell also

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

alludes to five young ladies of Portsmouth who made the flag they presented to Jones "from slices of their best silk gowns." That ladies were in the habit of making flags, even long before the episode of this Portsmouth quilting party, is shown by a quaint letter written by Catherine of Arragon, one of the Queens of Henry VIII, to Thomas Wolsey, dated August 13, 1513. Referring to the Scottish war then in progress, the Queen says:—"My hert is veray good to it, and I am horrible bezy with making standards, banners and bagies" (badges).

While the patriotic ardor of these young ladies of Portsmouth may have prompted them to utilize their finery in the making of a flag for Jones, it is very improbable that it was hoisted on July 4th, for we are informed by Jones himself that he did not make a "more early appearance" in Portsmouth than July 12th. It will be recalled also that Congress did not promulgate the flag until the 3rd of September. J. Fenimore Cooper in speaking of Jones says:—"He always claimed to have been the first man to hoist the flag of 1775 in a national ship, and the first man to show the present ensign on board a man-of-war. This may be true or not. There was a weakness about the character of the man that rendered him a little liable to self-delusions of this nature; and while it is supposed he was right as to the flag which was shown before Philadelphia, the town where Congress was sitting, it is by no means as

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

reasonable to take it that the first of the permanent flags (Stars and Stripes) was shown at a place as distant as Portsmouth."

As Jones was in Boston on July 1st, the day he received orders to proceed to the *Ranger*, it was obviously impossible in those days of slow communication, for him to have transmitted specifications, and for the ladies to have made the flag by July 4th. In Mrs. De Koven's "Life and Letters of John Paul Jones," doubt is expressed about the claim made for Jones in connection with the raising of the flag on the *Ranger* in July 1777, for she says:—"But the honor of first unfurling the Stars and Stripes from a ship of war, which has been claimed for Jones, is not supported by historical evidence. If he had been lucky enough to have had the opportunity of first unfurling the new national banner from the *Ranger*, it is not to be believed that he would have omitted to mention the fact."

It is interesting to recall the fact that on the very day Congress adopted the Stars and Stripes as the flag of the Republic, it ordered Jones to the *Ranger* and that "one of the first things Jones did on reaching his ship, was to hoist this new ensign." Unfortunately we do not know the date of this event.

It is very evident that Buell based his story on sentimental imagination rather than upon historical inquiry. Had the incident described by Buell taken place, the design of the new flag would have been

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

known and perhaps adopted at once, by all ship masters, and yet we know that the *Raleigh*, with Captain Thompson in command, sailed from Portsmouth on July 9th under the Continental ensign. The account of the honors paid to the flag on that occasion is quaintly told in the July 19th issue of the *New Hampshire Gazette* of Portsmouth:—

“When the *RALEIGH* frigate went down the River, every well wisher to the cause seemed to vie with each other in paying respect to the Continental colors as she passed along, particularly at Fort Washington where the lines was man’d and the soldiers all drawn up in great order, the Commanding officer ‘Prick’d’ them on to show their joy, in a most extraordinary polite manner. Lt. W---E saluted with the pike, in a method quite new; the soldiers took every motion from the Lieutenant and went thro. the whole maneuvers in a most surprising manner. As day was very windy, made it impossible to hoyst the colors at either of the Forts; but to show their humiliation to the thirteen United States they laid their flags low in the dust.”

Admiral Chester is of the opinion that the Stars and Stripes was first hoisted on the *RALEIGH*, at Portsmouth, on July 4, 1777, and that the flag was loaned Captain Thompson by Jones for the purpose. It is difficult to reconcile this view with the description given of the sailing of the *RALEIGH*, on July 9th under Continental colors. As the flag had been

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

adopted in Philadelphia, an important maritime port, the reasonable conclusion would seem to be that its first display was from some ship lying at that city.

Whatever the facts may be regarding the initial display of the new ensign, it is quite certain that from the *RANGER* it received its first salute from a foreign power. Sailing from Portsmouth on November 1, 1777, with Jones in command, the *RANGER* reached Quiberon Bay, France, about December 1st. On February 14, 1778 her flag received the salute of the French Government.

John Adams has stated that the first American vessel to obtain a foreign salute for the flag, was the *Andrea Doria* in the Dutch West Indies, in November, 1776. This is true, but the ship carried the Continental ensign, and while the salute was undoubtedly given, even though it was afterwards disavowed, it was not the Stars and Stripes which the French commander saluted, since the West Indies incident occurred eight months before the National ensign existed.

As there has been much controversy over the first display of the flag from a warship, it is of interest to note the several claims that have been advanced for this honor. In Griffin's "History of Commodore Barry" there is this reference to the flags:—"Under this flag Hopkins was the first to get to sea, and Barry's *Lexington*, bearing it, was the first to cause



"FIRST RECOGNITION OF THE AMERICAN FLAG BY A FOREIGN NATION"

(From a painting by Edward Moran in the National Gallery, National Museum, Washington, D. C.)

This salute was made by the French fleet to Captain John Paul Jones' Ensign on the *Ranger* at Quiberon Bay, February 14, 1778.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the British flag to surrender to the flag of Washington." And again:—"His cruiser (the *Lexington*) was the first Union Flag to make the first capture that was first reported to the Marine Committee of Congress."

John Fiske, in speaking of the *Lexington's* capture of the British vessel *Edward* on April 7, 1776, says:

"This was the first capture of a British warship by an American." This is further confirmed by Preble in his history, when he says:—"The *Lexington* was the first vessel that bore the Continental flag to victory on the ocean." As this exploit occurred over a year before the Stars and Stripes was officially adopted, the flag borne by Barry was, of course, the Continental ensign.

The difficulty of identifying the first flag raised is largely due to the uncertainty of what the historians of that period meant when using the phrase "American flag." On a previous page an effort has been made to make the designation clear and positive. While there is a controversy regarding the initial display of the national flag from a war vessel, there seems to be no doubt that Jones received the first salute ever given to the Stars and Stripes by a foreign power.



BON HOMME RICHARD FLAG

(Alternate red and white stripes, white stars on blue field.)

said to have flown in toward the American ship. "Ben Hamm, Richard"



THE BON HOMME RICHARD



NO REFERENCE to the early history of the flag upon the seas would be complete without a brief allusion to the battle between the *Bon Homme Richard* and the *Serapis* in the evening of September 23, 1779. Thackeray once told a friend that the capture of the *Serapis* by Paul Jones was one of the most extraordinary stories ever recorded in naval history. Without question, that moonlight battle was the greatest exploit in the annals of the sea and the courage of John Paul Jones and his brave crew, fighting to victory from the decks of a sinking ship, forms one of the brightest pages in our history. In the words of a sailor poet, probably a member of the *Richard's* crew, whose description is better than his grammar or the quality of his verse:—

“An American frigate—a frigate of fame,
With guns mounted forty—Goodman Richard by name,
Sailed to cruise in the channels of Old England,
With a valiant commander—‘Paul Jones’ was that same.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

"He had not cruised long before he espies
A large forty-four, and a twenty likewise,
Well manned with bold seamen, well laid in with stores,
In consort to drive him from Old England's shores.

"The contest was bloody, both decks run with gore;
The sea seemed to blaze while the cannons did roar.
'Fight, my brave boys,' then Paul Jones he cried,
'And soon we will humble this bold Englishman's pride.'"

Americans will ever pay tribute to the sublime confidence and daring of Paul Jones. Bidding defiance to all human calculations which had predoomed him to defeat, with a foundering ship, half his men dead or dying, when hope and chance seemed irretrievably lost, he fought on and won immortal glory.

All great events seem to invite controversies and it is so with reference to the flag borne by the *Richard*. In 1898 the Government received what was purported to be the original ensign of Jones's old ship. According to the story, which for a time had some support in the popular fancy, the *Richard*, several days before encountering the *Serapis*, captured a British vessel, the *Kitty*, which had formerly been an American ship. Among the crew was one Stafford, who volunteered for service on the *Richard*, and who, it is alleged, during the action with the *Serapis* plunged into the sea and recovered the *Richard's* flag, which had been shot away. When Jones transferred his crew from his

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

sinking ship, it is stated that this sailor rescued the flag and later accompanied Jones to the *Alliance* upon his assuming command of that vessel. When the *Alliance* was sold, the flag was presented to Stafford in recognition of his services. It is said that a letter was sent by Joseph Myler, secretary pro tempore of the Marine Committee, to Joseph B. Stafford, presenting to him "Paul Jones's 'Starry Flag' of the *Bon Homme Richard*, which transferred to the *Alliance* in recognition of his meritorious services. Beyond this letter there is no positive evidence that this Stafford flag, which has only twelve stars, was the one that waved from the ensign gaff of the *Richard* in the most desperate of all sea conflicts. Those who doubt the authenticity of the Stafford flag, assert that the bunting of which it is made, is of a date subsequent to the battle with the *Serapis*. It is also maintained that Stafford's name does not appear on any ships' papers of that time.

Another story which has gained considerable vogue is to the effect that the flag of the *Richard* had been made by two maiden ladies of Philadelphia, who presented it to Captain Jones shortly after Congress had adopted the Stars and Stripes. It is claimed that this is the so-called Stafford flag, and was flown from the *Ranger* when Jones took command of that ship and was afterwards transferred to the *Richard*.

Buell, in his "Life of Paul Jones," gives a rather

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

fanciful account of this much-disputed flag:—"The 'unconquered and unstricken' flag that went down with the *Richard* was the same one which the girls of Portsmouth made from slices of their best silk gowns, and presented to Jones to hoist on the *Ranger*, July 4, 1777, and he considered it his personal property, or perhaps, the property of the girls who made it, intrusted to his keeping. On relinquishing command of the *Ranger* in 1778, he kept this flag with him and used it on the *Richard*. It was made by a quilting party according to specifications which Jones furnished. The 13 white stars were cut from the bridal dress in which Helen Seary had been wedded in May, 1777."

"This was the first edition of the Stars and Stripes that Europe ever saw; the first to be saluted by the guns of a European naval power; but, far beyond that, and beyond anything, it was the first and last flag that ever went down or ever will go down flying on the ship that conquered and captured the ship that sunk her."

"When Jones returned to this country in February, 1781, he found Miss Langdon, of the 'quilting party', a guest of the Ross family, whose house was always his home in Philadelphia. By way of apology he explained to her that his most ardent desire had been to bring that flag home to America, with all its glories, and give it back untarnished into the fair hands that had given it to him nearly four years

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

before. "But, Miss Mary," he said, "I couldn't bear to strip it from the poor old ship in her last agony, nor could I deny to my dead on her decks, who had given their lives to keep it flying, the glory of taking it with them."

"You did exactly right, Commodore," exclaimed Miss Langdon; "that flag is just where we all wish it to be—flying at the bottom of the sea over the only ship that ever sunk in victory!"

I fear sentiment has been interwoven with history in this interesting story, for while the records are very complete in describing the battle, their reference to the colors is most meager. In Jones's memoirs, compiled from papers in the possession of his niece, Mrs. Taylor, there is a reference stating that few of the personal effects of the officers were saved. In the journal prepared by Jones for the King of France, he speaks of everything going down with the ship except signal flags. As the national ensign is never used as a signal in the sense in which Jones referred to the signal flags which were saved, Buell assumed, and quite correctly, that the Stars and Stripes was left flying at the peak when the *Richard* sank beneath the waves.

In July, 1905, Scribner's Magazine published the "Narrative of John Kilby," quarter gunner of the *Richard*. In this narrative, written in 1810, the sinking of the *Richard* is described as follows:—

"O Heavens! It was enough to bring tears from

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the most unthinking man. She went down head foremost with all sails set—studding sails, top-gallant sails, royals, skyscrapers, and every sail that could be put on a ship—jack, pennant, and that beautiful ensign that she so gallantly wore while in action and when she conquered.”

It has been asserted that Jones referred to the loss of the flag in his report of the engagement to Congress, but, unfortunately, the records do not disclose this fact. The several letters written by the great commander to numerous friends describing the battle, are silent on the flag episode. Yet Mr. Buell states that Jones made a report in which he said:—

“No one was now left aboard the *Richard* but her dead. To them I gave the good old ship for their coffin, and in her they found a sublime sepulcher. She rolled heavily in the long swell; her gun deck, awash to the port sills, settled slowly by the head and sank peacefully in about 40 fathoms. The ensign gaff, shot away in action, had been fished and put in place soon after firing ceased, and our torn and tattered flag was left flying when we abandoned her. As she plunged down by the head at the last, her taffrail momentarily rose in the air; so the very last vestige mortal eyes ever saw of the *Bon Homme Richard* was the defiant waving of her unconquered and unstricken flag as she went down. And, as I had given them the good old ship for their sepulcher, I

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

now bequeathed to my immortal dead the flag they had so desperately defended, for their winding sheet."

In Abbott's life of John Paul Jones, no mention is made of saving the flag. In fact, he quotes a letter in which Jones says:—" * * * it was impossible to save the stores of any sort whatever. I lost the best part of my clothes, books and papers." For the sake of history and in honor of the memory of the great sailor, let us hope that Buell based his eloquent and pathetic account of the sinking of the *Bon Homme Richard* upon substantial grounds.

The name of the famous *Bon Homme Richard* was selected by Jones to honor his friend Benjamin Franklin. Jones in an effort to secure a ship from the French Government wrote numerous letters to friends at court, but without success. One day by chance there fell into his hands an old almanac containing "Poor Richard's Maxims" by Franklin. In that curious collection of wit and wisdom was this:—"If you wish to have any business done faithfully and expeditiously, go and do it yourself. Otherwise, send some one." The philosophy of this maxim deeply impressed Jones and he decided to abandon his letter writing and go in person to Versailles to press his request in person. The result was that on February 4, 1779, he received from the French Minister of Marine a letter informing him that the King would give him the command of the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

forty gun ship *Duras*. Jones, feeling that his success was due to the good advice he had received from "Poor Richard", asked and obtained leave to have the name *Goodman Richard* given his new command.

Before passing to another subject, let me present two views regarding the flags of this famous ship. While personally strongly of the opinion that the *Richard's* flag was lost with the vessel and that there is no substantial evidence to authenticate the Stafford flag, yet in all fairness I desire to set forth two conjectures which are worthy of consideration. Captain Preble, author of a history of the flag, in a paper read before the New England Historical Society on July 9, 1873, spoke of the Stafford flag as follows:—"It was worn by the *Bon Homme Richard* during the action with the *Serapis*, September 23, 1779, and there is reasonable if not convincing circumstantial evidence for the claim that it was the first flag bearing the stars and stripes ever hoisted over an American vessel of war, and the first that was ever saluted by a foreign naval power." (This, of course, refers to the *Ranger*.)

"The story of the flag is this:—About ten days before the battle between the *Richard* and the *Serapis*, Commodore Jones captured a British man-of-war and her prize, an American armed ship called the *Kitty*. The Englishman had put his prisoners in irons, and on their re-capture, Jones, with retributive justice, transferred those bracelets to the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

officers and crew of the British vessel. On their release, the entire crew of the *Kitty* volunteered to serve on board the *Bon Homme Richard* in revenge for the treatment they had received from their British captors. Among these volunteers was a young man named James Bayard Stafford, a nephew of the commander of the *Kitty*. Being an educated and active young man, he received an appointment as an officer on board the *Richard*.

"When the battle was raging most furiously this flag was shot away, and young Stafford jumped into the sea and recovered it, and was engaged in replacing it when he was cut down by an officer of the *Serapis*. When the *Bon Homme Richard* was sinking, the flag was seized by a sailor, transferred by Paul Jones to the *Serapis*, and thence by him to the *Alliance*, when he took command of that frigate at the Texel. The flag remained on board the *Alliance* until the close of the revolutionary war, when the vessel was sold to Robert Morris, the great financier of those times, and was fitted under his auspices for the East India Trade. Shortly after her sale, the secretary of the marine committee wrote to Lieutenant Stafford, that by the advice of Commodore John Barry, and in consideration of his services in recovering the flag after it had been shot away in the action between the *Bon Homme Richard* and *Serapis*, the committee had decided to present to

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

him this flag, the medicine chest of the *Richard*, and a Tower musket taken from the *Serapis*.

“What more probable then than that this flag presented by the ladies of Philadelphia, the first of the kind ever raised over an American vessel of war, the first to receive a salute from a foreign power, and highly valued by Jones, should be carried by him to the *Bon Homme Richard*, when he hoisted his flag on board of that ship, be worn during the action with the *Serapis*, and be transferred first to her on the sinking of the *Richard*, and finally to the *Alliance*, when Jones took command of her?”

Admiral Chester, who has made a study of the National flag, advances this explanation regarding the flags flown by the *Richard*. He attributes a large part of the confusion that has arisen regarding them to the fact that the *Richard*, in addition to the Commander's pennant, carried no less than three ensigns, one furnished by the Government and two by Jones himself. He believes that the so-called Stafford flag is authentic, and that it was made by several ladies of Philadelphia and by them presented to Jones, who immediately loaned it to Captain Thompson, whose ship, the *Raleigh*, was then anchored at Portsmouth, New Hampshire, in order that the Stars and Stripes might be displayed on July 4, 1777, as previously mentioned. The *Richard* also bore the flag made by Helen Seavey's quilting party at Portsmouth, about which there has been so

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

much uncertainty. Jones carried both these flags with him to the *Bon Homme Richard*, displaying the flag made by the Philadelphia ladies from the mizzen mast head, and the Portsmouth flag from the spanker gaff. According to the Admiral, it was the Portsmouth flag which Stafford rescued from the sea, and which, after the spanker gaff,—shot away in the conflict—had been repaired, was again hoisted at the peak and eventually went down with the ship. The Philadelphia flag after the battle, was transferred to the *Serapis*, together with the other American flag and the Commodore's broad pennant. It was this Philadelphia flag which was presented to Stafford by the Navy Board at Philadelphia and is now in the National Museum at Washington. Admiral Chester explains the absence of Stafford's name on the ship's papers by the fact that as he had only just come aboard the *Richard* as a recaptured prisoner from a British prize, he was not a member of the regular crew and would therefore not be listed on its rolls.

It will be noted that this much discussed Stafford flag displays but twelve stars. Assuming for the purpose of discussing the discrepancy in the number of stars, that the Stafford flag is genuine, some explanation is necessary to account for the display of twelve stars rather than thirteen. The easiest explanation is that the makers looked upon the cluster of stars in the union more as an ornament than as

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

a representation of the states, and that as thirteen was an awkward number to arrange, twelve was substituted for convenience.

There is, however, an historical reason which might have prompted the use of but twelve stars, for until September, 1775, Georgia, a strong tory colony, was not represented in the Continental Congress, although she had elected delegates the June previous. The absence of Georgia in the deliberations of Congress gave rise to the feeling that there were but twelve colonies united in their protests against the British ministry. This was reflected in a resolution passed by Congress on June 7, 1775,—(incorporated from the “corrected” journal) appointing a day of humiliation, fasting, and prayer, to be observed “throughout the twelve United Colonies.” The Commission issued to George Washington on June 17th was in the name of “the delegates of the United Colonies”, the twelve from New Hampshire to South Carolina being mentioned, but Georgia omitted. On June 30th when Congress adopted “Rules and articles for the better Government of the Troops” they bore on the title page “of the Twelve United English Colonies of North America.” The address to the British people issued July 8th was headed “The Twelve United Colonies.” There are other documents which show conclusively that Georgia, due to the absence of delegates, was not considered officially in the Confederacy. At no

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

time, however, after September 13, 1775, when Georgia claimed representation, did Congress ever regard the union as of fewer than the thirteen which eventually formed the Federation. On November 7, 1775, Congress printed a revision of the Rules of War, the title page of which bore the inscription "Of the Thirteen United English Colonies of North America"; thirteen having been substituted for the twelve of the original print. It seems rather strained reasoning to conclude that the makers of a flag in 1777 based the number of the stars to be displayed upon a situation which had not existed for two years, especially as the persons who are supposed to have made the flag were residents of the city where the Continental Congress held its sessions, who would naturally be familiar with the events of the day. I know of no other explanations to account for the singular appearance of this flag.





FORT McHENRY FLAG

The Flag which floated over Fort McHenry, Baltimore, Md., during the bombardment by the British fleet, Sept. 13, 1814, when Francis Scott Key was inspired to write the "Star Spangled Banner". The Fort McHenry flag is now in the custody of the National Museum, Washington, D. C. It measures 32 feet by 29 feet; originally 32 feet by 40 feet, but was shortened by British bullets and the work of souvenir hunters.



THE FLAG OF FIFTEEN STRIPES

THE FLAG as originally adopted remained unchanged until May 1, 1795. By this time two more States, Vermont and Kentucky, had been admitted into the Union and a change in the flag was made necessary. Not foreseeing the growth of the flag in the addition of both a stripe and a star for each new State, Congress on January 13, 1794, enacted—

“That from and after the 1st day of May, 1795, the flag of the United States be fifteen stripes, alternate red and white; that the union be fifteen stars, white in a blue field.”

This number of stripes was never exceeded, although there were twenty states in the union before another change was made. In the flag of fifteen stripes the stars were placed in three parallel rows of five stars each, and this flag was the national banner from 1795 to 1818, during which period occurred the War of 1812, when eighteen states were engaged in its defense. It was this flag waving over Fort McHenry which inspired Francis Scott Key to write

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the "Star-Spangled Banner." This fifteen-striped flag was carried in the war against the Barbary Pirates and was hoisted over Tripoli after its capture. It flew over the American ships in the Battle of Lake Erie and was carried by Commodore Porter around the Cape of Good Hope and around Cape Horn. It cheered the soldiers of Jackson, fighting behind their breast works of cotton bales, at the battle of New Orleans in 1815.

By 1818 five additional States, Tennessee, Ohio, Louisiana, Indiana and Mississippi—had been admitted into the Union and therefore, truly to represent the Union, a further change in the flag was demanded. After considerable discussion in Congress on the subject, the act of April 4, 1818, was passed, which provided:—

"First, That from and after the 4th of July next the flag of the United States be thirteen horizontal stripes, alternate red and white; that the union have twenty stars, white in a blue field.

"Second, That on the admission of every new State into the Union one star be added to the union of the flag and that such addition shall take effect on the 4th of July next succeeding such admission."

To the Honorable Peter H. Wendover, a Member from New York, belongs the credit of pressing it to final passage. The return to the 1777 flag with its thirteen stripes, symbolizing the original thirteen

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

states, was due largely to the fact that it would not be practicable to continue adding a stripe for each new State, for a further increase in the number of stripes would have made the width of the flag disproportionate to its length, unless the stripes were narrowed, and this would have impaired its distinctness. Captain Reid of the Navy who had suggested the return to the thirteen stripes, proposed legal recognition of the sentiment for separate flags for the land and sea forces. He also recommended the committee to establish a national standard, to be composed of four emblematical representations of our escutcheon, to be placed in the four quarters of the flag, as follows: the stars at the top in the left-hand corner, the eagle in the right-hand corner, with the goddess of liberty under the stars, and the stripes under the eagle; this standard to be hoisted over the halls of Congress, and on our ships of war, navy yards, and other public places, when visited by the President and other dignitaries.

He also desired to make a distinction between the flags worn by our national vessels and those of the merchantmen, by simply arranging the stars in parallel lines in the union for the naval service, and forming them in one great star in the union for the merchant service, but these designs were not approved.

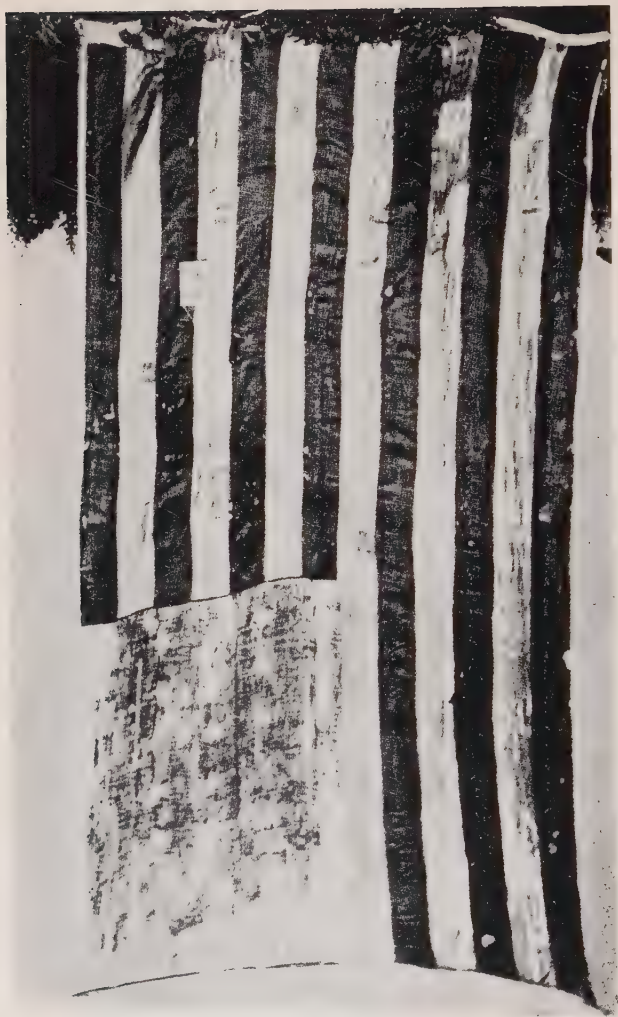
A newspaper of the times said:—"By this regula-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

tion the thirteen stripes will represent the number of States whose valor and resources originally effected American independence, and the additional stars will mark the increase of the United States since the establishment of the Constitution." The change in the design of our flag from fifteen to thirteen stripes may have inspired Drake to write these lines:—

"As fixed as yonder orb divine
That saw the bannered blaze unfurled,
Shall thy proud stars resplendent shine,
The guard and glory of the world."

No act has since been passed by Congress altering the general design of the flag and it is the same as originally adopted except for the increase in the number of stars in the union. In the War with Mexico the flag displayed twenty-nine stars in its union; during the Civil War, thirty-five; during the Spanish-American War, forty-five stars; and since July 4, 1912, forty-eight stars. Congress has never legislated upon the arrangement of the stars in the union and in consequence there has been a lack of uniformity in the matter, although the early confusion has now disappeared and in the absence of direct legislation an agreement has been reached between the Navy and War Departments on the subject. The present arrangement of the stars is in six horizontal rows of eight stars each.



"OLD GLORY"

Captain Driver's Original Ship Flag, so Named by Him.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

OLD GLORY

The term "Old Glory" was evidently first applied to the flag by William Driver in 1831, a skipper from Salem, Massachusetts, who was at that time in command of the brig, *Charles Doggett*. It is related, that as he was about to sail for the South Seas a party of friends presented him with the flag and when it was broken from the gaff the captain christened it "Old Glory." We do not know the source of his inspiration for this term, but Captain Driver may have been familiar with the poem that appeared in the *Massachusetts Spy* fifty-seven years previously, already referred to, beginning

"A ray of bright glory now beams from afar,
The American ensign now sparkles a star."

In 1837 the captain removed to Nashville, Tennessee, taking with him "Old Glory", which he afterwards displayed on all public occasions. His pronounced Union sentiments frequently led him into trouble with his southern neighbors and during the war he was obliged to conceal the flag in the coverlet of his bed. In 1862 when a detachment of Buell's army occupied the city, Captain Driver, with his own hands, hoisted "Old Glory" over the Capitol building.

The history of the flag from this time seems clouded in uncertainty, and I will refer briefly to several statements that have been made in regard to it.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

The Reverend Henry N. Couden, chaplain of the House, a veteran of the Sixth Ohio Volunteer Infantry, feels confident that the "Old Glory" flag no longer exists. The respect and veneration in which Dr. Couden is held by every Member of Congress, entitles his contribution to the history of this famous flag to be accepted as evidence that the flag was accidentally destroyed. He states that February, 1862, his regiment had been ordered to relieve Grant at Donelson, but while they were on the transports word came that the fort had surrendered. They were then ordered to Nashville, where on February 25th they took part in the ceremonies incident to the raising of the Stars and Stripes over the capitol. The next day Captain Driver obtained Colonel Anderson's permission to hoist "Old Glory" to the mast and a squad of soldiers was detached to procure the flag, which the captain with his own hands raised over the building. The captain then presented the flag to the Sixth Ohio and this regiment fought under "Old Glory" at Shiloh and Stone River. In keeping it aloft in the Battle of Stone River six men were shot down but "Old Glory" was kept waving and did not touch the ground. For about a year "Old Glory," the name having then been adopted by other regiments, was the regimental flag of the Sixth Ohio. For safe-keeping the flag after sunset each day was deposited in one of the quartermaster's wagons, but one night some of the mules, having

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

broken loose, destroyed the flag. Dr. Couden's statement is amply verified, if any verification be necessary, by the following paragraph taken from Hannaford's "History of the Sixth Ohio Regiment":

"The flag, with whose history so many interesting associations were connected, was presented to the Sixth Ohio, by which it was regarded as a most precious souvenir. It passed safely through all the campaigns of the regiment, until October 1863, when Fred Schnell's mules discovered it one night where it was stowed away in the headquarter's wagon and before morning had eaten "Old Glory" up, leaving only a few shreds to tell the sacrilegious tale."

In order to make the record complete, I insert extracts from a letter sent me by the Essex Institute, of Salem, Massachusetts, which claims to have in its possession the original flag. The secretary states that the original "Old Glory" was presented to the institute by a niece of Captain Driver, who sent with the flag the following letter, written by the captain himself:—

"Nashville, Tennessee, September 25, 1880. My dear Niece:—I send you this my oldest flag. It has been everywhere, my companion around the world, waved at Pitcairn, and among the icebergs of Cape Horn. This is my "Old Glory", like me neglected and worn out, but there is no stain upon it, etc., etc."

The secretary of the institute then closes his letter

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

with this statemnt:—"The traditional story in relation to the flag eaten by the mule has also come down to us but is said to refer to another flag. Let me say this also in this connection, that a descendant of Captain Driver, living in the far West, I think Nevada, also has a flag of Captain Driver's, which she claims to be the original. But in view of the evidence of this letter, which came to us with our flag, there can be no doubt as to the facts in the case."

The above statements are refuted by Mrs. Mary Roland, of Nevada, a daughter of Captain Driver, who, under date of August 15, 1913, stated that:—"The original flag "Old Glory" has never been out of the possession of our family. This flag, my father named "Old Glory", he gave me in July, 1873, and it has remained in my possession ever since." Mrs. Roland asserts that when her father, in 1880, asked her to send him "Old Glory" she sent him, without his knowledge, another flag and that it was this substitute flag and not "Old Glory" which was deposited by his niece in the Essex Institute shortly after the captain's death.

In 1900 the then President of the Essex Institute, Honorable Robert S. Rantoul, prepared the following statement which was forwarded to Peleg D. Harrison, author of the "Stars and Stripes." In it he refutes the statement made by Dr. Couden in regard to the mule, and claims that the Ohio regiment carried another flag:—

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

“Dear Sir:—You ask me for some account of a United States flag in possession of the Essex Institute, and known as ‘Old Glory’, which once belonged to Captain William Driver, of Nashville, Tennessee. So far as I know them, the facts are these:—

“We received the flag, which is much worn, in May, 1886, from the hands of Captain Driver’s niece, Mrs. Harriet Ruth (Waters) Cooke, together with a framed trophy containing a likeness of Captain Driver and several letters. The Captain was born in Salem, March 17, 1803. He removed in 1837 to Nashville, and died there March 2, 1886. He commanded, in 1831, the Hermaphrodite Brig, ‘Charles Doggett’, and sailed in her from Salem on the famous voyage which resulted, in August of that year, in the rescue of the mutineers of the British ship ‘Bounty’, and their restoration to their home in Pitcairn Island. We have the original letter of acknowledgement for this service framed with his picture. Under it is Captain Driver’s autograph certificate of its authenticity, bearing date, November 16, 1880, with these words for a headline: “MY SHIP, MY COUNTRY AND MY FLAG, OLD GLORY.” It seems from contemporary proofs which I will give you, that this was an habitual form of designation with Captain Driver as early as 1862. Nobody seems to have come forward claiming to have applied the epithet ‘Old Glory’ to the United

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

States flag before 1862. It is a fair assumption that the phrase was his.

"A correspondent of the Philadelphia Press, in giving a contemporary account of the capture of Nashville in February, 1862, thus alludes to Captain Driver:—'A corporal's guard was sent to the old man's house, where they ripped from the coverlet of his bed an immense flag containing a hundred and ten yards of bunting, and he brought it himself to the Capitol and unfurled it from the flag-staff. Then, with tears in his eyes, he said: 'There, those Texas Rangers have been hunting for that these six months without finding it, and they knew I had it. I have always said if I could see it float over that Capitol I should have lived long enough; now 'Old Glory' is up there, gentlemen, and I am ready to die.'

"In a letter written by Captain Driver, at Nashville, February 27, and printed in the Salem, Massachusetts Register of March 10, 1862, he recounts the occupation of the State Capital by the Federal troops on February 25, alludes three times to the flag as 'Old Glory' and says, 'The Ohio 6th, the first to land, hoisted their small, beautiful flag on the State House. About an hour after, I carried my flag, 'Old Glory', as we have been used to call it, to the Capitol, presented it to the Ohio 6th and hoisted it with my own hands on the Capitol.' In Captain Driver's letter from Nashville of March 30, printed in the Register of April 10, he twice

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

used the words 'Old Glory' to describe the flag, and gives extracts from his journal during the terrible experiences of the siege.

"The flag in question has a rare history, and remained with him a cherished relic until 1880, when he presented it to his niece, Mrs. Cooke, with instruction to dispose of it on his death as she saw fit, and upon that event, six years later, she gave it to the Essex Institute.

"When our Civil War broke out it found him a retired shipmaster living at Nashville. He was a pronounced friend of the Union, but he was without sympathy even in his own family. He trembled for his cherished flag, for he had been an outspoken man, and all the city knew his sentiments. 'Old Glory' had always floated from his window on days of public rejoicing. Its history was known and every Confederate felt it to be his mission to get possession of that flag. The house and grounds were searched in vain. The old Captain's seamanship had stood him in good stead. An adept with the needle, he had quilted the flag into his comforter, and it had been his congenial bedfellow. On February 25, 1862, Federal troops entered Nashville, and the stress was over. The Stars and Stripes resumed their place over the State Capitol. When Captain Driver saw this he hastened home, released 'Old Glory' from its snug retreat, and obtained permission to raise the historic ensign with

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

his own hands in place of the smaller Regimental colors which had been run up on the State House flag-staff. He was given an escort and protection in transferring the sacred relic from its hiding place to the dome of the Capitol. No little enthusiasm was evoked, in that frenzied hour, at this somewhat perilous adventure.

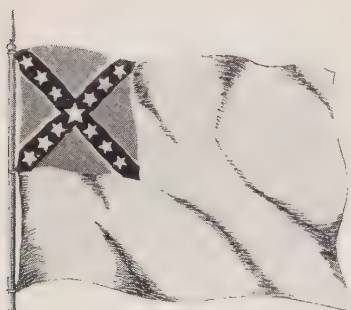
"That night the winds and bullets were busy with its folds, and while the Captain, who stayed by his flag, could protect it from Confederate fury, it suffered much from the fury of the elements. The next day he replaced it with a newer and stronger flag which had been selected with 'Old Glory' and this second flag he presented later to the Ohio 6th, on its marching for the South, and thus saved to the future the interesting relic which we preserve. Captain Driver afterward became Provost Marshal of Nashville, and was honored with many tokens of regard and trust both there and in Salem."





SOUTHERN CROSS OR CONFEDERATE BATTLE FLAG—1861

(Red field, 13 white stars on blue cross.)



SECOND CONFEDERATE
FLAG—1863

*(White field with Southern Cross or
Battle Flag for a canton.)*



THIRD CONFEDERATE
FLAG—1865

*(Same as the Second Confederate Flag.
The outer half from the union
being red.)*

The Southern Cross was adopted in 1861 by the Confederate States. Objections were raised, (a) that it could not be adapted to sea service (i. e., it could not be reversed as a signal of distress), (b) that at a distance it could not be distinguished from the Union Flag. Accordingly its design was changed in 1863 to what is shown as the Second Confederate Flag. This new design also had its faults, chiefly, that when furled against the staff, the white obscuring the canton, it looked like a flag of truce. This led to the adoption of the Third Confederate Flag. It will be seen that there are 13 stars in the canton of these flags, while the proper number should be eleven, representing the seceding states, Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas and Virginia.



THE CONFEDERATE FLAGS



ON MARCH 5, 1861, the Flag of the Confederate States of America was adopted by the Provisional Confederate Congress. But the following action was entered upon the Journal of Proceedings as if of the day previous, when the flag had been first publicly displayed over the State House at Montgomery, Alabama, where the Congress was then in session:—

“The Flag of the Confederate States of America shall consist of a red field, with a white space extending horizontally through the center, and equal in width to one-third the width of the flag; the red spaces above and below to be of the same width as the white. The union blue, extending down through the white space, and stopping at the lower red space; in the center of the union a circle of white stars, corresponding in number with the States of the Confederacy.” There was evidently at this time a strong desire on the part of many in the South to retain as much as possible of the design of the Stars and Stripes. I do not think it

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

is definitely known who designed this flag known as the "Stars and Bars." It was not generally used by the Confederate Army, the usual battle flag of the troops being the famous Southern Cross, a banner with a red field, dissected by a blue diagonal cross embellished by white stars representing the States in the Confederacy.

Due to the similarity between the Stars and Stripes and the Stars and Bars, the two flags were not readily distinguished from each other, which frequently lead to confusion and uncertainty. The *Richmond Dispatch* of December 7, 1861 contained an article, advocating a change in the design of the Southern flag:—

"The adoption of our present flag was a natural, but most pernicious blunder. As the old flag itself was not the author of our wrongs, we tore off a piece of the dear old rag and set it up as a standard. We took it for granted a flag was a divisible thing, and proceeded to set off our proportion. So we took, at a rough calculation, our share of the stars and our fraction of the stripes, and put them together, and called them the 'Confederate flag.' Even as Aaron of old put the gold into the fire, and then came out this calf, so certain stars and stripes went into committee, and then came out this flag. All this was honest and fair to a fault. We were clearly entitled to from seven to eleven stars, and three or four of the stripes.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

"There is but one feature essential to a flag, and that is distinctness. Beauty, appropriateness, good taste, are all desirable; but the only thing indispensable is distinctness,—wide, plain, unmistakable distinction from other flags. Unfortunately, this indispensable thing is just the thing which the Confederate flag lacks; and failing in this, it is a lamentable and total failure, absolute and irredeemable.

"We knew the flag we had to fight; yet, instead of getting as far from it, we were guilty of the huge mistake of getting as near to it as possible. We sought similarity, adopting a principle diametrically wrong. We made a flag as nearly like theirs as could, only under favorable circumstances, be distinguished from it. Under unfavorable circumstances (such as constantly occur in practice), the two flags are indistinguishable.

"There is no case in history in which broad distinction in the symbols of the combatants was more necessary than it has been in the present war. Our enemies are of the same race with ourselves, of the same color, and even shade of complexion; they speak the same language, wear like clothing, and are of like form and stature.

"Our general appearance being the same, we must rely solely upon symbols for distinction. The danger of mistake is great, after all possible precautions have been taken; sufficient attention has never

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

been paid to this important matter, involving life or death, victory or defeat. Our badges, uniforms, flags, should be perfectly distinguishable from those of the enemy. Our first and distant information is dependent solely on the flag."

Many designs for the new flag were suggested, but the Confederate Congress by act approved May 1, 1863, provided:—

"That the flag of the Confederate States shall be as follows:—

The field to be white, the length double the width of the flag, with the union (now used as the battle-flag) to be a square of two-thirds the width of the flag, having the ground red; therein a broad saltire of blue, bordered with white and emblazoned with white mullets or five-pointed stars, corresponding in number to that of the Confederate States."

Strong objection was made to this flag, for at a distance it closely resembled the British white ensign. Another objection was the preponderance of white, easily soiled in practical use, and which gave to the flag, when hanging in folds against the staff, the appearance of a flag of truce. To meet these objections the Confederate Congress on March 4, 1865, amended the law as follows:—
"The width, two-thirds of its length; with the union,—now used as a battle flag,—to be in width three-fifths of the width of the flag, and so proportioned as to leave the length of the field on the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

side of the union twice the width below it; to have a ground of red, and a broad blue saltire thereon, bordered with white and emblazoned with mullets or five-pointed stars, corresponding in number to that of the Confederate States. The field to be white, except the outer half from the union, which shall be a red bar, extending the width of the flag."

The South had another banner, more famous in song than in bunting, however. It was the "Bonnie Blue Flag," having a white field, with a magnolia tree in the center, a blue canton on which was depicted a star, and finished with a red border and fringe. It is said that the display of this flag in the Hall on the night the vote on the secession ordinance was taken in Mississippi, inspired Harry McCarthy, an Irish comedian, to write the song which was so popular south of the Mason and Dixon line, sixty-five years ago: —

"We are a band of brothers, and native to the soil,
Fighting for the property we gained by honest toil;
And when our rights were threatened the cry rose near and far:
'Hurrah for the Bonnie Blue Flag that bears the single star!'"

In this discussion of the several Confederate Flags adopted, it is interesting to recall the views expressed by Professor Samuel F. B. Morse of Massachusetts, the inventor of the telegraph. He was an earnest pleader against coercion, and a conspicuous opponent of the war measures of the government from the beginning to the end of the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

conflict. He was elected President of the American Society for the Promotion of National Union, and suggested methods by which our sectional difficulties might be adjusted without bloodshed. In the event of a temporary dissolution of the Union he suggested a division of the Stars and Stripes. On that point B. J. Lossing, in "The Civil War in America", quotes him as follows:—"The Southern Section is now agitating the question of a device for their distinctive flag. Cannot this question of flags be so settled as to aid in a future union? I think it can. If the country can be divided, why not the flag? The Stars and Stripes is the flag in which we all have a deep and the self-same interest. It is hallowed by the common victories of our several wars. We all have sacred associations clustering around it in common, and, therefore, if we must be two nations, neither nation can lay exclusive claim to it without manifest injustice and offense to the other. Neither will consent to throw it aside altogether for a new and strange device, with no associations of the past to hallow it. The most obvious solution of the difficulties which spring up in this respect is to divide the old flag, giving half to each. It may be done, and in a manner to have a salutary moral effect upon both parties.

"Let the blue union be diagonally divided, from left to right or right to left, and the thirteen stripes

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

longitudinally, so as to make six and a half stripes in the upper, and six and a half stripes in the lower portion. Referring to it as on a map,—the upper portion being north, and the lower portion being south,—we have the upper diagonal division of the blue field and the upper six and a half stripes for the Northern flag, and the lower six and a half stripes for the Southern flag,—the portion of the blue field in each flag to contain the stars to the number of States embraced in each Confederacy. The reasons for such division are obvious. It prevents all dispute on a claim for the old flag by either Confederacy. It is distinctive; for the two cannot be mistaken for each other, either at sea or at a distance on land. Each being a moiety of the old flag, will retain something, at least, of the sacred memories of the past for the sober reflection of each Confederacy. And then, if a war with some foreign nation, or combinations of nations, should unhappily occur (all wars being unhappy) under our treaty of offense and defense the two separate flags, by natural affinity, would clasp fittingly together, and the glorious old flag of the Union, in its entirety, would again be hoisted, once more embracing all the sister States. Would not this division of the old flag thus have a salutary moral effect inclining to union? Will there not also be felt a sense of shame when either flag is seen by citizens of either confederacy? Will it

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

not speak to them of the divisions which have separated members of the same household, and will not they there be forced from their lips? Why is the old flag divided? And when once the old, time-honored banner, bequeathed to us by our honored ancestors of every State, shall be flung to the breeze in its original integrity, as the rallying-point for a common defense, will not a shout of welcome, going up from the Rio Grande to Maine, and from the Atlantic to the Pacific, rekindle in patriotic hearts in both confederacies a fraternal yearning for the old Union?"

The Stars and Stripes was lowered at Fort Sumter, South Carolina, April 14th, 1861. It was raised over the surrendered Confederate Capitol at Richmond, Virginia, on April 3, 1865.





SPECIAL FLAGS AND FIRST DISPLAYS



WHILE we have but one flag for use on sea, as well as land, by merchant ships and men-of-war alike, Congress very early in our history adopted a special flag for the Revenue-Cutter Service consisting of sixteen perpendicular stripes, alternately red and white. The union is white, on which is depicted in blue the national coat of arms—the eagle surmounted by a half circle of thirteen stars. The large number of stripes is accounted for by the fact, that at the time the “ensign and pennant” of the Revenue-Cutter Service was established, in 1799, there were sixteen States in the Union and the arrangement has never been altered. Under the act of January 28, 1915, the Life-Saving Service and the Revenue-Cutter Service were combined under the title, “United States Coast Guard,” and the revenue flag adopted as a distinguishing flag, to be flown from the foretruck or pennant staff. There is also a flag known as the “Yacht Ensign” established by Act of Congress, August 7, 1848, to permit owners of American yachts to dis-

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

play an ensign distinct from the National Flag, in keeping with the custom in vogue in other maritime countries. The flag prescribed under authority of this Act and which continues to be the recognized American yacht ensign, was the National ensign, substituting in the blue field a white foul anchor, encircled by thirteen stars in white, in lieu of a star for each State.

The Union Jack, commonly called the "jack", consists of the union of the national flag—a blue field with forty-eight white stars arranged in six parallel rows of eight stars each. The Navy regulations specify that "when at anchor the union jack shall be flown from the jack staff from morning colors to evening colors." The jack is used also as a signal for a pilot and to denote the session of a court-martial. "When a diplomatic official of the United States of and above the rank of chargé d'affaires pays an official visit afloat, the union jack shall be carried on a staff at the bow." In addition to these flags, there is a flag for the President and for several of the departmental heads and assistants, as well as for special divisions of the Government service. There are also flags for the various arms of the Military service and for officers of high rank.

As much interest centers around the initial occurrence of any incident or event, there is submitted this brief summary in the history of the flag.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

The first display of a flag, truly representative of the united colonies was from the vessels outfitted by General Washington, some time in the early fall of 1775. The ensign was the Pine Tree Flag.

To Captain John Manley belongs the honor of first carrying the flag to victory. His ship the *Lee* captured the British brig *Nancy* on November 29, 1775. The flag was the Pine Tree ensign, with its motto "An appeal to Heaven." Cooper in his "History of the United States Navy" says:—"Although it may not be strictly true to term the *Lee*, and the other small cruisers similarly employed, the first vessels that ever belonged to the general Government of the country, they may be deemed the first that ever actively sailed with authority to cruise in behalf of the entire republic." It is only fair to state that the schooner *Hannah* captured a prize in September 1775.

The first display of the Continental flag was from the *Alfred*, at Philadelphia in December 1775. In Cooper's "History of the United States Navy" he says:—"The first ensign ever shown by a regular man-of-war was hoisted in the Delaware on board the *Alfred* by the hands of John Paul Jones some time about the last of December 1775."

The first display of the Continental flag on land was at Prospect Hill, Charlestown, Massachusetts, January 1, 1776. This honor is also claimed by

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

Cambridge, where it is asserted it was flown over Washington's Headquarters on the same day.

The first naval victory won under the Continental flag was by Captain John Barry of the *Lexington*, April 7, 1776. Some authorities give the honor to the *Hancock*, Commodore Manley, while others favor the claim of Hopkins when his squadron engaged the British ship *Glasgow*, on April 6, 1776.

The first display of the Continental flag in a foreign country was by Commodore Hopkins at New Providence, West Indies, on March 3, 1776.

The first salute to the Continental Flag by a foreign country occurred at St. Eustatius, Dutch West Indies, on November 16, 1776. The flag was flown from the *Andrea Doria*, Captain Isaiah Robinson. This ship was named for Andrea Doria, a Genoese liberator of the Sixteenth Century. Some writers maintain that three weeks earlier at the Danish Island of St. Croix, an American schooner was saluted.

The first official display of the Stars and Stripes in battle was at Fort Stanwix, New York, August 3, 1777.

The first display of the Stars and Stripes on a naval vessel has never been determined. Both the *Ranger* and the *Raleigh* have been mentioned for the honor. It seems more than probable, however, that it was first flown from some ship lying off Philadelphia.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

The first naval victory of the Stars and Stripes was on September 4, 1777, when the *Raleigh*, Captain Thomas Thompson, captured the *Nancy* of the Windward Fleet. The *Hancock* captured the *Fox*, June 27, 1777, but the flag carried is not known.

The first salute to the Stars and Stripes by a foreign country occurred in Quiberon Bay, France, on February 14, 1778. The flag was flown from the *Ranger*, Captain John Paul Jones.

It is claimed that the Stars and Stripes was first displayed in England, in December 1782, but it was not a flag made of bunting, being instead the pictorial representation from the brush of an American painter. The story is related that, after listening to the address of the King formally recognizing the independence of the United States, Copley, the noted American artist, repaired to his studio in London and then and there attached the Stars and Stripes to a portrait of Elkanah Watson previously prepared by him, "representing in the back ground a ship bearing to America the intelligence of the acknowledgment of Independence, with a man just rising upon the stripes and the union streaming from the gaff." The picture was completed previous to the royal acknowledgment of independence, except the flag, which Copley "did not esteem it prudent to hoist under present circumstances, as his gallery was a constant resort of

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

the royal family and nobility." But it was not until February 3, 1783 that the real flag was seen in a seaport of Great Britain.

Immediately after the preliminary treaty of peace which recognized our independence, American ship owners sought markets in foreign countries. One enterprising Quaker shipmaster of Nantucket, having whale oil to sell, sent his vessel, the *Bedford*, Captain William Moores to the Thames in the winter of 1783. A London periodical of that year thus speaks of her arrival:—

"The Thirteen Stripes. The ship *Bedford*, Captain Moores, belonging to Massachusetts, arrived in the Downs on the 3rd of February, passed Gravesend the 4th, and was reported at the Custom House the 6th instant. She was not allowed regular entry until some consultations had taken place between the Commissioners of the Customs and the Lords of Council, on account of the many acts of Parliament in force against the rebels of America. She was loaded with four hundred and eighty-seven butts of whale oil; is American built, manned wholly by American seamen, wears the rebel colors, and belongs to the island of Nantucket, in Massachusetts. This is the first vessel which has displayed the thirteen rebellious stripes of America in any British port. The vessel lies at Horsly-down, a little below the

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

tower, and is intending to immediately return to New England."

The following humorous article appeared in the London Chronicle of February 7, 1783:—"There is a vessel in the harbor with a very strange flag. Thirteen is a number peculiar to the rebels. A party of naval prisoners lately returned from Jersey, say that the rations among the rebels are thirteen dried clams a day. The titular Lord Stirling takes thirteen glasses of grog every morning, has thirteen rum bunches on his nose, and that when he gets drunk makes thirteen attempts before he can walk. Sachem Schuyler has a topknot of thirteen stiff hairs which erect themselves on the crown of his head when he grows mad. It takes thirteen Congress paper dollars to equal one shilling sterling. Polly Wayne was just thirteen hours in subduing Stony Point, and thirteen seconds in leaving it. Every well-organized rebel household has thirteen children, all of whom expect to be major generals or members of the high and mighty congress of the thirteen United States when they attain the age of thirteen years. Mr. Washington has thirteen teeth in each jaw, and thirteen toes on each foot, the extra ones having grown since that wonderful declaration of independence, and Mrs. Washington has a tomcat with thirteen rings around his tail, and that his flaunting it suggested

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

to the Congress the same number of stripes for the rebel flag."

Could this writer contemplate the greatness and the power of America today, his sarcasm might be less biting but he would see that thirteen was still held in veneration by the nation he referred to in such scornful terms. On our national coat of arms there is displayed, in addition to thirteen stars and thirteen stripes, the American eagle grasping in one claw thirteen arrows and in the other an olive branch bearing thirteen leaves, while the motto "E. Pluribus Unum" contains thirteen letters.

Further confirmation that the *Bedford* was the first ship to display the national ensign in English waters is given in a letter written by William Rotch, Jr., one of her owners. Due to the fact that Mr. Rotch was writing from his recollection of events that transpired sixty years previously, there is a discrepancy of twenty days between the day mentioned in his letter and the actual date of arrival of the ship:—

"New Bedford, 8th month, 3d, 1842.

"Dear Friend:—In reply to thy letter of the 21st ult. received last evening, according to the best of my recollection, my father had a vessel built by Ichabod Thomas, at North River, just before the Revolution, for himself and Champion

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

& Dickson, of London, for the London trade. After the war commenced she laid at Nantucket several years.

"In 1781, Admiral Digby granted thirty licenses for our vessels to go after whales. I was then connected with my father and I. Rodman in business. Considerable oil was obtained in 1782. In the fall of that year I went to New York and procured from Admiral Digby licenses for the *Bedford*, William Moores, master, and, I think, the *Industry*, John Chadwick, master. They loaded. The *Bedford* sailed first, and arrived in the Downs the 23d (3d) of February, the day of the signing of the preliminary treaty of peace between the United States, France and England; and went up to London, and there displayed for the first time the United States flag.

"We sent the sloop *Speedwell* to Aux Cayes, Santo Domingo. She was taken and carried into Jamaica, but her captain was released one day after. By the treaty, the war ceased in that latitude, and she was released when she showed the first United States flag there. On her return home, everything was very low by return of peace. We put on board two hundred boxes of candles, and with William Johnson (whose widow I learned, lives at Quassi) as supercargo, sent her to Quebec, where hers was the first United States flag exhibited.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

"Should thee wish any further information within my recollection, I will freely communicate it.

I am, with love to thy wife,

"Thy affectionate friend,

"Wm. Rotch, Jun."

Thus it will be seen that the *Speedwell*, was the first to show the Stars and Stripes in Santo Domingo, Jamaica and Quebec.

The honor of being the first to carry the Stars and Stripes to the Orient is generally conceded to the *Empress of China* which sailed from New York on February 22, 1784, arriving at Macao, China, August 23rd, and at Whampoa above Canton, on the 28th.

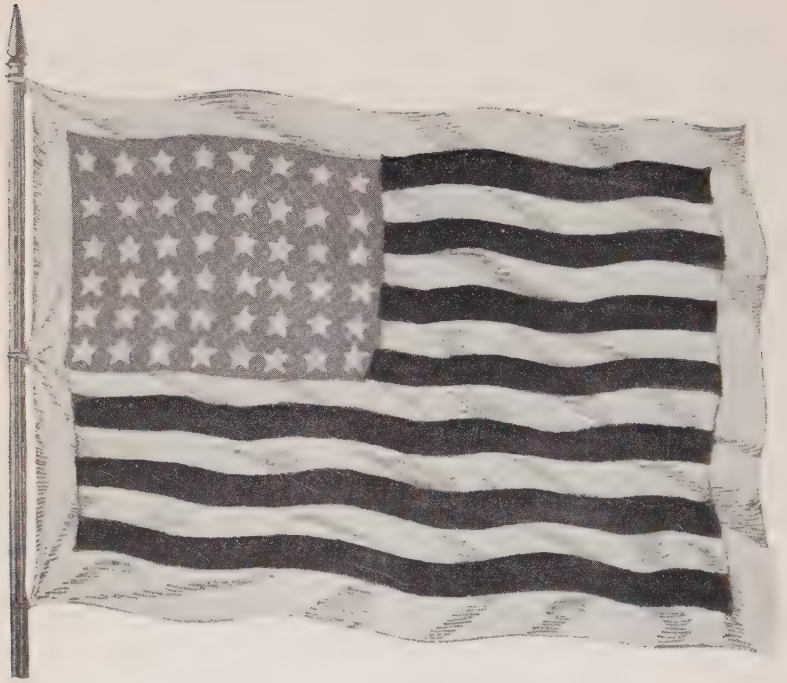
"And everywhere
The slender, graceful spars
Poise aloft in the air,
And at the masthead,
White, blue and red,
A flag unfolds, the stripes and stars,
Ah, when the wanderer, lonely, friendless
In foreign harbors shall behold
That flag unrolled,
T'will be as a friendly hand
Stretched out from his native land,
Filling his heart with memories
sweet and endless."

—Longfellow.

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

The first circumnavigation of the world by the Stars and Stripes was on the ship *Columbia*, Captain Gray, 1787-90. With the same ships he discovered the Columbia River in Oregon on May 11, 1792.





UNITED STATES PEACE FLAG

At a meeting of representatives of the Nations at the Hague, no universal Peace Flag was adopted, but it was agreed, August 29, 1913, that each Nation's Peace Flag be its own flag, surrounded by a white border.

CONCLUSION



IN CLOSING this fragmentary and probably imperfect history of the flag, permit me to quote the late Henry Ward Beecher:—

“A thoughtful mind, when it sees a nation’s flag, sees not the flag but the nation itself; and whatever may be its symbols, its insignia, he reads chiefly in the flag the government, the principles, the truth, the history, that belong to the nation that sets it forth. The stars upon it were to the pining nations like the bright morning stars of God, and the stripes upon it were beams of morning light. As at early dawn the stars shine forth even while it grows light, and then as the sun advances that light breaks into banks and streaming lines of color, the glowing red and intense white striving together and ribbing the horizon with bars, effulgent, so, on the American flag, stars and beams of many colored light shine out together. And wherever this flag comes and men behold it, they see in its sacred emblazonry no ramping lion and no fierce eagle, no embattled castles or insignia of imperial authority; they see the symbols of light. It is the banner of Dawn.” It has eloquently been said:—

“Let us then twine each thread of the glorious tissue of our country’s flag about our heartstrings;

THE FLAG OF THE UNITED STATES

and looking upon our homes and catching the spirit that breathes upon us from the battle fields of our fathers, let us resolve, come weal or woe, we will, in life and in death, now and forever, stand by the Stars and Stripes. They have been unfurled from the snows of Canada to the plains of New Orleans, in the halls of the Montezumas and amid the solitude of every sea; and everywhere, as the luminous symbol of resistless and beneficent power, they have led the brave to victory and to glory. They have floated over our cradles; let it be our prayer and our struggle that they shall float over our graves."

In silent grandeur the flag waves over the tombs of the dead, over the homes of the living; the emblem of truth and righteousness, inspiring men's hearts on the land and on the sea with faith and hope, the symbol of the power, the unity and the purpose of our Republic, now and forever.



FORT MCHENRY AT THE ENTRANCE TO BALTIMORE HARBOR.

By direction of Congress a memorial was erected in Fort McHenry "in memory of Francis Scott Key, author of the 'Star-Spangled Banner,' and the soldiers and sailors who participated in the Battle of North Point and the attack on Fort McHenry in the War of Eighteen hundred and twelve." The memorial is a colossal bronze figure representing Orpheus striking the lyre. The figure stands on a cylindrical pedestal elaborately carved (Charles Henry Niehaus, Sculptor.) The monument is near the entrance to the Fort which has a reservation of 50 acres, now known as Fort McHenry Park.

The flagstaff of the Fort is in the original position, near which, on a rampart, is a statue of Major George Armistead who was breveted Lieutenant-Colonel for his successful defense of Fort McHenry. (Edward Beige, sculptor.)

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

and

AMERICA

THE STAR-SPANGLED BANNER

O say! can you see, by the dawn's early light,
What so proudly we hailed at the twilight's last gleaming,
Whose broad stripes and bright stars, through the perilous fight,
O'er the ramparts we watched were so gallantly streaming?
And the rocket's red glare, the bombs bursting in air,
Gave proof through the night that our flag was still there.
O say, does that Star-Spangled Banner yet wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave?

On the shore dimly seen through the mists of the deep,
Where the foe's haughty host in dread silence reposes,
What is that which the breeze, o'er the towering steep
As it fitfully blows, half conceals, half discloses?
Now it catches the gleam of the morning's first beam,
In full glory reflected now shines on the stream.
'Tis the Star-Spangled Banner, O, long may it wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

O, thus be it ever, when freeman shall stand
Between their lov'd home and the war's desolation!
Blest with vict'ry and peace, may the heav'n-rescued land
Praise the power that hath made and preserved us a nation!
Then conquer we must, when our cause it is just,
And this be our motto, "In God is our Trust."
And the Star-Spangled Banner in triumph shall wave
O'er the land of the free and the home of the brave.

FRANCIS SCOTT KEY (1780-1843).

*[Version prepared at the request of the U. S. Bureau of Education
by the following Committee: Will Earhart (Chairman), Walter Dam-
rosch, Arnold J. Gantvoort, O. G. Sonneck and John Philip Sousa.]*



House in which the Fort McHenry Battle Flag was made by
Mrs. Mary Pickersill, Albemarle and Pratt Sts., Baltimore, Md.



FRANCIS SCOTT KEY was born in Frederick County, Maryland, August 1, 1779 (or, according to some authorities, August 9, 1780), and died in Baltimore, Maryland, January 11, 1843; graduated from St. John's College, Annapolis, Maryland, in 1798; practiced law in Frederick, Maryland, and in Washington, D. C.; appointed United States Attorney for the District of Columbia in 1833 by President Jackson. His poems were published in 1857. Baltimore, San Francisco and Frederick (where he is buried) have honored Key with substantial memorials. The "*Star-Spangled Banner*" was written by Francis Scott Key on the morning of September 14, 1814, and had for its inspiration the successful resistance of Fort McHenry against the British in their attack on Baltimore, Maryland, September 12th and 13th, shortly after their capture of Washington.

Dr. William Beanes of Upper Marlboro, Maryland, taken prisoner, had been released by General Ross, on the plea of his intimate friend, Francis Scott Key. President Madison sent his agent for exchange of prisoners, John S. Skinner, to aid Key, and placed a cartel-ship at his service. They were ordered, however, to remain with the fleet until after the attack on Baltimore. Key and Skinner viewed the bombardment of Fort McHenry from their own small vessel, anchored in sight of the fort.

Since the Fort had ceased firing after midnight, their anxiety was intensified, but with the dawn came rejoicing. They observed the "Stars and Stripes" still flying over the fort and the British fleet had withdrawn. They were soon released, and Key finished his poem as he was rowed ashore.

The poem was first issued as a handbill, and later appeared in the *Baltimore Patriot* (Sept. 20, 1814) and in the *Baltimore American* (Sept. 21, 1814).

The "Star-Spangled Banner" was first sung in Baltimore by Ferdinand Durang shortly afterwards to the tune "To Anacreon in Heaven" (composed by an Englishman, John Stafford Smith, about 1780) which was quite popular at the time.

For an extensive study on our national poem, the reader is referred to Oscar G. T. Sonneck's "The Star-Spangled Banner" published by the Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., 1914.

AMERICA

My country, 'tis of thee,
Sweet land of liberty,
Of thee I sing;
Land where my fathers died,
Land of the pilgrims' pride,
From every mountain side
Let freedom ring!

My native country, thee,
Land of the noble free,
Thy name I love;
I love thy rocks and rills,
Thy woods and templed hills;
My heart with rapture thrills
Like that above.

Let music swell the breeze,
And ring from all the trees
Sweet freedom's song;
Let mortal tongues awake,
Let all that breathe partake,
Let rocks their silence break,
The sound prolong.

Our fathers' God, to Thee,
Author of liberty,
To Thee we sing;
Long may our land be bright
With freedom's holy light;
Protect us by Thy might,
Great God, our King!

SAMUEL FRANCIS SMITH (1808-1895).



AMUEL FRANCIS SMITH was born at Boston, October 21, 1808; died November 16, 1895; clergyman and author of hymns and songs. He was 24 years of age when he wrote "My Country, 'tis of Thee", at the Andover Theological Seminary, Andover, Mass. It was first sung in public at a children's celebration of American Independence at the Park Street Church, Boston, July 4, 1832, to the tune of "God Save the King."

He was a member of the Harvard Class of 1829, and at their reunion in 1859, Dr. Oliver Wendell Holmes read his poem on "The Boys." Of the author of "America" he wrote:

*"And there's a nice youngster of excellent pith—
Fate tried to conceal him by naming him Smith;
But he shouted a song for the brave and the free,—
Just read on his medal, "My country," "of thee"!"*

Henry Carey, an English poet and composer of musical farces, is the reputed author of the words and music of "God Save the King" (1740). He was born near the end of the 17th century; died at London, October 4, 1743.

1849



Photograph by Central News Photo Service

FLAGS WHICH SIGNALIZED AMERICA'S ENTRANCE INTO THE
WORLD CONFLICT BEING BORNE INTO ST. PAUL'S
CATHEDRAL BY THE FIRST AMERICAN TROOPS
TO REACH LONDON AFTER THE DECLARATION
OF WAR WITH GERMANY

The Stars and Stripes were blessed in the great English shrine, and are
to be preserved for all time, together with those of our Allies,
whose national emblems, like our own, are waving over the
hosts fighting for the world's liberty.

1
A 1000

mm

m

o o

o o

929.9
H52

Hicks

Flag of the
United States

929.9
H52

Hicks.

Flag of the United States.



A



